PERSONALLY EDITED BY WID

THE FILM AUTHORITY

Wid's

WEEKLY

PUBLISHED IN HOLLYWOOD

VOL. I. No. 19 SATURDAY, OCTOBER 6, 1923 Subscription $10.00 per year

CHARLES RAY

As "John Alden"
in
"The Courtship
of Myles Standish"

They May Not Always Agree--- But They Do Read "Wid's"

Everyone agrees that advertising is good.

The decision is always one of how to reach the people you want to reach so that you are sure they see your announcement.

Wid has never claimed or expected that everyone will adways agree with his opinions.

The important thing from the viewpoint of the advertiser is that every important personage in the film industry—executive, director, author, player, technical artists and theater owners—does read carefully what he has to say.

It is your job to sell yourself. That's good business. Everyone expects you to, because, after all, that's your job.

Having ability is one thing, and selling that ability is something else.

There are too many folks with ability who are selling their ability to the buyers for the buyers to worry about hunting up folks who don't take the trouble to present themselves for consideration.

WHAT'S YOUR NAME WORTH?

Wid's Quarterly goes to press this month. Have you arranged to be represented in this issue, which will contain every review written personally by Wid since returning to the editorial desk?

The man who doesn't recognize "Old Man Opportunity" when he meets him can properly complain to no one but himself.

Yours for service,

Business Offices,
Wid's Weekly
6411 Hollywood Blvd.
Upstairs over Levy's

Holly 1662

Wid's Weekly

Vol. I. No. 19 Saturday, October 6, 1923 Price 25c

Copyright, 1923, by Wid's Weekly

Published Weekly at
6411 Hollywood Blvd.,
Hollywood, Calif.

Editor - - - - - - - - - - - - Wid Gunning

Subscription $10.00 one year In United States; Foreign $15.00.
Subscribers should remit with order.

Editorial and Business Offices
6411 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood, Calif.

New York Representative: Merrit Crawford
Room 1503, 25 West 45th St. Phone Bryant 4174.

You will be interested in talking with Mr. Crawford regarding the combined circulation of Wid's Weekly and Wid's Quarterly.

The Industry Must Not Be Labelled "Republican"

I have never had the honor of meeting the gentleman who was labeled the "Czar of the Movies"—Will Hays.

I have rather avoided Mr. Hays. I haven't gone out of my way to avoid meeting him, but I have always felt that possibly I would have a clearer angle on what he is doing if I stayed away from ear-shot of his undoubted persuasive conversation. The Honorable Bill certainly must be a "persuader" because he is ranked as one of our best politicians, and I say he proved himself some "persuader" when he maneuvered himself into the position of picking off a very fat salary, which friend Adolph Zukor, more or less, committed himself to pay. Anyone who can sell himself into that sort of a job with Mr. Zukor has a good line of argument.

Mr. Hays has gone to Europe with another remarkable politician, Ambassador Harvey. They insist that Mr. Hays has gone on a vacation, and that the trip has no political significance.

I have always said that it was a mistake to put Mr. Hays in the position that he has been in, because Mr. Hays is a politician.

You might write all the denials that you might care to write, but you will never be able to convince the Democrats in this country that Bill Hays has gone off to Europe with Ambassador Harvey for any other purpose than to discuss the next presidential campaign from the Republican viewpoint.

Many times it has been said that the screen must be kept out of politics. Personally, I think the screen will be in politics from now on, more or less, but certainly the screen should be kept out of "party" politics.

The only politics which the screen should be in is politics affecting the selection of men for office who are in sympathy with the needs of the screen. We need men in public office who will permit us to present entertainment without hindrance from a lot of poor saps. We all know that most of the active reformers are reformers because they make a living at it. The only way to stop those birds is to get the screen into politics enough to shut off these hypocritical leeches.

Recently Martin Quigley of the Exhibitors Herald suggested that Hays jump into the fight for the repeal of the oppressive taxes now being levied on film theatres. Editor Bob Welsh of the M. P. World stepped forth with the statement that he believed it would be a mistake to have Mr. Hays do anything about the tax problem, because Mr. Hays, having been a politician, might mess things up if he got into politics at Washington and also because the politicians would think that the film industry should be able to pay a terrific lot of tax if they were able to pay Bill Hays the salary which he pulls down regularly.

I am inclined to agree very decidedly with Bob Welsh that Mr. Hays would be the wrong person to send to the admission tax fight.

I am inclined very decidedly to believe that Mr. Hays' connection with the film industry may be most embarrassing in any event as the presidential election approaches.

Reviews This Week

A WOMAN OF PARIS—Chaplin

THE EXTRA GIRL—Sennett Assoc. Exhibitors

STRANGERS OF THE NIGHT—Niblo-Mayer-Metro

THUNDERING DAWN—Universal

LITTLE OLD NEW YORK–Cosmopolitan Goldwyn

ZAZA–Paramount

HELD TO ANSWER—Metro

Of course, if the boys who are paying Mr. Hays' salary feel sure enough that the Republicans are going to win the next time and they are willing to gamble very heavily on that issue, then that's another matter.

It is going to be impossible to ever really plant the thought that Mr. Hays is out of politics. It so happens that a man can be in politics up to his ears without appearing to be so, and for that reason a man can be thought to be in politics and unable to prove that he is not, when he has absolutely no connection whatever with political activities.

No matter what I ever might do in my young life, I will always be known as the guy that runs a film paper and writes reviews about pictures.

No matter what Bill Hays may ever do to attempt to divorce himself from politics, he will always be known as a Republican politician.

Going off to England with Ambassador Harvey at this particular time certainly won't help any to relieve the thought that Mr. Hays is very much interested in Republican politics.

I wouldn't expect Mr. Hays to say that he intends giving up a very sweet contract with the motion picture interests, and I imagine that he will continue to collect until the contract expires. Nevertheless, Will Hays' presence in the position which he now holds definitely puts the screen in the worst kind of politics, which is party politics. Before the parties begin to get rough with one another in the next campaign, it would be advisable that something be done about it.

Mr. Hays in talking with me personally could undoubtedly convince me that he is out of politics forever. Unfortunately, he can't personally visit everyone in this country that needs to be convinced, and I don't think he could convince the Democrats or the other good citizens who are not Republicans, even if he talked with them personally.

Opportunity Is the Big Word--Fight for Your Chance

Seigmund Lubin, grand old veteran of the films, died last week. Mr. Lubin was 72 years old at his death.

All of the "old timers" had a great regard for Mr. Lubin. His death brings forcibly to mind a thing which came up the other day in talking with George Kleine about the development of the industry and the possibilities of the next ten years.

The film industry today holds marvelous opportunities for the young man, but the success of those who have really made big successes in this industry point the fact that a man should not be counted anywhere near out just because he may be fairly well along in years.

Mr. Kleine commented on the fact that almost all of the men who were associated together in the organization of the General Film, which organization absolutely owned this industry at one time, were men of advanced years. Most of these men began to make their fortunes after they had passed what is generally termed middle age.

The men who have come along in this business through a period of years have the chance to go very far up the ladder in the ten years to come. Fortunes can be made today in this industry easier than they were made in the days of the General Film.

There has been a lot of comment on the fact that many of the men who have made fortunes in this business have afterwards lost them. That naturally happens in any speculative or rapidly growing industry, but in nearly every instance where a man has made a fortune and then dropped entirely out of the running, you will find upon checking up that his fortune came more from opportunity alone than from any actual knowledge of the industry itself. The combination of knowledge and opportunity cannot be kept down. If you have experience and ability, keep seeking your opportunity.

If ever there was an industry in which opportunity means more than it does in this, I would like to hear about it. Probably that is what makes it such a fascinating field to work in.

The day has arrived when a man may develop a very small organization and produce

one film which will return to him a sufficient fortune that he need never work again.

There is one unfortunate drawback to the method of operating in this industry which has existed from the very first. The outsider has never been welcome.

In the past ten years I have had several hundred keen, intelligent, educated men come to me with stories of their persistent efforts to secure some sort of a connection in the film industry. Those men have been willing to go to work for practically nothing in order to grow up with the industry. They have faced brick walls. Many times they were unable to get inside the office of important corporations.

We all know that the industry has not enough big men. We all know that there are many men sitting in important positions that are not big enough for their jobs and never will be.

I believe we are approaching the day when the outsider will be more welcome. I believe we are approaching the day when relations and friends will not be permitted to clog up the machinery and hinder the work of the capable workers.

I sincerely hope that the day of "automatic success" in this industry will pass soon. I believe it will. We are going to have a sharp division between the very big pictures and the average pictures for the average houses, and that naturally means a keener competition in each field.

I don't wish anyone any bad luck, and I have no one in mind when I make this statement, but I certainly hope that as this season rolls by there will be some decided losses registered both in the fields of expensive but poor productions and in the field of machine-made product that is not worthy of being offered even at popular prices.

It has been too easy to make money in this industry. It will get easier for the capable people. It will get much harder for those who cannot deliver.

The weeding out process is coming. We are going to need a lot of additional brains to take care of the possibilities of this industry. I hope that those in a position to do so will begin to give more serious consideration to the men seeking opportunity. When a man who has real ability is willing to give his best without asking pay until he earns it, that man is worth two thousand of the sort who in many instances only clutter up the machinery of this industry through having been placed in responsible positions calling for ability, which they haven't, which positions were given them because they are relatives or friends of men in charge.

With the competition becoming keen, as it is this year, a few costly mistakes will do more for bettering the personnel of the industry than anything short of an earthquake that would catch all of the incompetents in conference at once. Again I say, I don't wish anyone any bad luck, but I do believe that a few heavy losses this year would be a very healthy thing for the industry and would eventually be tremendously helpful to the companies which sustain the losses.

Glen Cavender
CHARACTER HEAVIES
as
"Red Mike" with Charles "Buck" Jones,
in Wm. Fox Productions
Phone 577-742

Delightful Characterization—Big Climax--Truly Great

A Woman of Paris

Charles Chaplin Special
Length 7 Reels

DIRECTOR..... Charles Chaplin

AUTHOR.....Charles Chaplin and Monta Bell

CAMERAMAN..... Rollie Potheroh

GET 'EM IN.....Being Charlie's first serious effort makes this sure-fire as to pulling power.

PLEASE 'EM.....Any type of audience must love the characterizations and bits of business. It can't miss.

SPECIAL APPEAL.....Concentrate all exploitation on fact Charlie registers directorial genius with this.

WHOOZINIT.....Edna Purviance, Adolphe Menjou, Carl Miller, Lydia Knott, Charles French, Clarence Geldert and other good players.

STORY VALUES.....Entire construction builds to one big dramatic climax with most of footage given to characterization studies that make final situations tremendously effective.

TREATMENT.....In many ways characterization development in this is best screen has ever seen. There are marvellous human touches and frequently a great kick is registered by suggesting something rather than actually showing it.

CHARACTERIZATIONS.....Adolphe Menjou gives most remarkable performance with Miss Purviance carrying into big moment most effectively and Carl Miller convincing throughout in development of sympathetic hero. Lydia Knott rings true every minute and hits hard in final climax scenes. Entire cast down to smallest bits beautifully done.

ARTISTIC VALUES.....Without exceptionally pretentious sets, atmosphere is perfectly established. The photography throughout is decidedly distinctive.

Get this and yell loud. Cash in and please 'em.

Charlie can throw away the funny pants, the cane and the derby any time he feels like it. Our great comedian, whom highbrows have sometimes seen fit to scorn because of his early pie throwing activities has stepped right out with a serious dramatic visualization that can't help but win any person with intelligence enough to appreciate beautifully done characterizations.

And the hero kills himself in the finish. What do you think of that? They don't have a clutch at the end. And yet you like the story. What do you think of that?

From the very first sequence we sense a distinctive technique because the story progresses smoothly, but rapidly, with just the highspots registered and something always left to your imagination.

All the way through we find delightful little pieces of business that are exceptionally human. Some of these are quite dramatic, many of them are pathetic and funny at the same time and some of them are about the nicest bits of subtle comedy that the screen has ever seen.

When Edna's hero sweetheart agrees not to marry her because his poor old mother thinks she is unfit for him since she has been a kept woman, we get to a point where the hero kills himself. When the boy's body is brought home the mother goes to Edna's apartment to kill her, finds she is not there and returns to her own home, only to discover Edna weeping beside her dead son. There is a marvellous emotional kick in this scene where the mother puts down the gun and slowly takes her place beside Edna, having realized too late that she had made a mistake in keeping these two apart. In tapering off from this highspot climax they suggest a reasonably happy existence for Edna in the country, caring for a lot of kiddies and at the finish Menjou, who had kept her in luxury in Paris, passes in one direction in his big auto while she rides along with one of the kiddies on the tailgate of an old farm wagon. It is a thoroughly consistent bit of dramatic construction from start to finish.

The opening sequence is tense drama very carefully screened with lightings that unconsciously concentrate all your attention on the faces of the players. The first comedy relief comes where Menjou and Purviance are introduced in the Parisian cafe, there being a delightful touch registered when Purviance asks Menjou who is the companion of an elderly lady whom he has bowed to. This person has been established by two or three close-ups so that when Menjou shrugs his shoulders in answer to Edna's inquiry it is a sure-fire hit.

The sequence where Edna's friend is telling her about another girl friend having had dinner with her sweetie works into some wonderful comedy through the manner in which the entire action is played to get the expressions of a blonde rubber working energetically on Edna. The disrobing scene in the wild studio party where the entire action is gotten over by the expressions of the crowd watching the slow unwinding of the cloth covering the nude model, without cutting back to the nude girl, is a great incident. I don't remember of ever having seen anything better than the incident where Menjou nonchalantly plays on a funny little saxophone while Edna tries to rave about what's wrong with their life. Edna's throwing of her pearl necklace out the window only to follow the man who picked it up, to recover it, fits in perfectly. When she returns Menjou is still nonchalantly playing the saxophone.

The story skeleton of this is slender but here is a production that conclusively proves that the right shading of characterization with good bits of business will carry a film through to some big situation much more effectively than where there is too much mechanical action to be established.

Phil Rosen

After three years directing for Universal, Metro, and Lasky, have just completed one year's work in research, preparing and

DIRECTING

"The Dramatic Life of Abraham Lincoln"

The Rockett-Lincoln Film Company's Super Special

Just Movie With Occasional Comedy Hokum Value

The Extra Girl

Sennett—Associated Exhibitors

Length 7 Reels

DIRECTOR.....**F. Richard Jones**

AUTHOR.....**Mack Sennett's story, adapted by Bernard McConville.**

CAMERAMAN.....**Homer Scott, with special effects by Ernie Crockett.**

GET 'EM IN.....**You can depend upon Mabel's following and title has some pulling power.**

PLEASE 'EM.....**This is ordinary movie most of the way, with only a few good highspots. It doesn't get over as "special."**

WHOOZINIT.....**Mabel Normand, Ralph Graves and good cast.**

SPECIAL APPEAL.....**There is movie studio stuff in this, but don't compare it with "Hollywood." It's not in the same class.**

STORY VALUES.....**Plot is crude cross between ordinary movie meller and Mack Sennett slapstick.**

TREATMENT.....**It doesn't move fast enough or consistently enough to be good comedy and fails utterly in dramatic moments.**

CHARACTERIZATIONS.....**The attempts at serious trouping miss because of the conglomerate story, leaving players registering routine movie characterizations.**

ARTISTIC VALUES.....**Very little that could be called distinctive, with studio shots not strong enough to justify particular emphasis.**

I believe this is a fire-cracker that fizzled.

Certainly, following "Hollywood" this suffers pitifully if it is to be compared. Considering it from the viewpoint of a Mabel Normand special they handicapped the star with a very poor story. It was neither dramatic or straight comedy hokum. There are a few comedy highspots, but nothing sufficiently worthy of commendation to make this register as having a chance in the "special" class.

The plot mechanics are crude and jumpy. Mabel wants to be a movie star. A rival sends another girl's photograph in Mabel's letter. Mabel is declared the winner. Upon arriving in Hollywood she is given a job in the Wardrobe Department. Eventually her parents come West. A city slicker swindles them with Mabel's unconscious help. Hero and Mabel hold up the villun and rescue the dough. Never at any time does this story convince. Why it should be called "The Extra Girl" cannot be figured, because, as shown on the screen, Mabel never becomes even an extra.

There are two comedy highspots. One is the regulation slapstick comedy chase when Mabel escapes from her family to go to Hollywood. It is just fair. The best seqnence in the film is the stuff where Mabel leads a lion through the studio with the lion finally turned loose to cause a panic on the lot. The "lion-at-large" gag has gone into many comedies of various lengths and it certainly is not new, although it is generally sure-fire and they have, in this, handled it for some good bits of business.

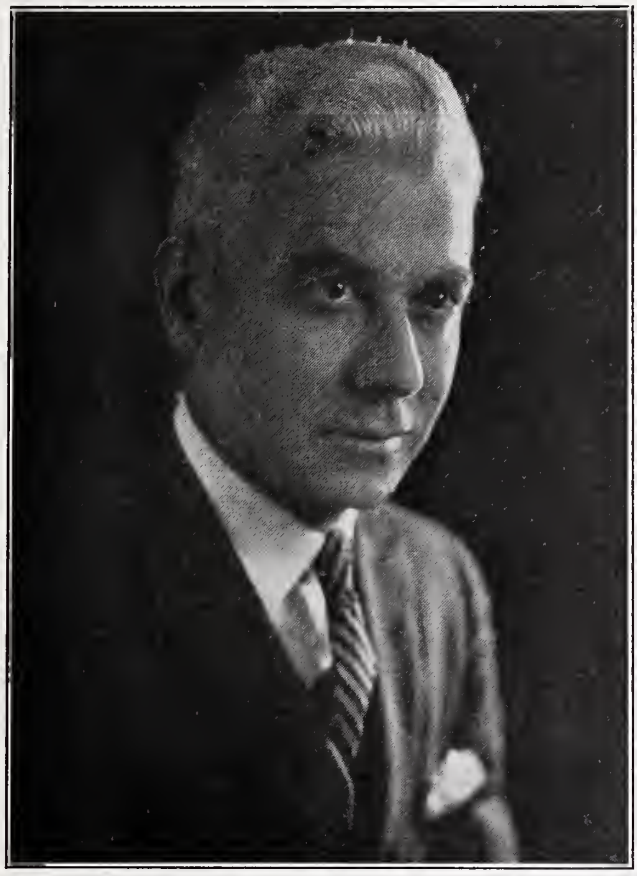
There was one very raw bit of comedy business that will get a yell, but is rather a matter of overreaching, particularly when the same bit is repeated as a tag ending, thereby sending people out of the house with this bit of bnsiness in their mind. This incident registered Mabel, dressed in a hoop skirt for a film test, and she is supposed to have sat down on an electrician's glove with the result that when she turns aronnd in front of the camera her hoop skirt flies up exposing the print of a black hand. Such gags are always good for a laugh, but then anyone could sit down and figure out hundreds of similar bits of business that might bring a laugh, but would hardly be considered the right sort of thing to show on the screen. It was bad enough to play this as pointedly as they did the first time, but surely it was poor judgment to force it again as the tag finish.

Some of the players made a serious attempt to get a note of sincerity into a situation here and there, but the crude plot construction and the disjointed manner in which it was all tied together, made it impossible for this to get over with anyone as anything but a movie hodge-podge with a few good hokum comedy moments.

You can safely figure this of average slapstick comedy value, with the knowledge that Miss Normand has a very large following and is, as always, very pleasing. This will not advance Mabel any, but neither will it hurt her particularly, because she has worked in enough slapstick in the past that her fans will forgive this appearance, understanding that the production faults cannot be laid upon her shoulders.

I would particularly caution you against attempting to sell this as a special and certainly advise that you do not compare it with "Hollywood." It lacks the production values and the comedy values that "Hollywood" carries. It also lacks the variety of studio shots and studio personages. Outside of the cast, Bill Desmond is the only player shown who is not a part of the plot itself.

As a sample of what I mean about the story being disjointed and unconvincing, we never see at any time where or how Mabel met the city slicker, yet she permits her father to slip him all of his fortune, $15,000 in cash, without batting an eye. We were also led to believe that Mabel, instead of going to the train to meet her family, sent the villain. It is probable that the disjointed effect is the result of considerable editing, but if that is the reason I would say that the editing has been very poorly done, because this is left in an indeterminate class. It is neither good slapstick, good straight comedy, or good comedy drama. It just misses all the way around, except for the chase, the lion seqnence and the gag abont Mabel sitting on the glove.



Ben Deely

"Lights Out"
For F. B. O.

Just Finished:
"The Acquittal"
For Universal
Directed by
Clarence Brown

Hollywood 8066

Mario Carillo

RECENT RELEASES:

"The Remittance Woman," with Ethel Clayton, for F. B. O.
"Bella Donna," with Pola Negri, for Lasky
"Rosita," with Mary Pickford

JUST FINISHED:

"Dust of Desire," with Norma Talmadge, for Joseph Schenck

Phone 567-182

Wonderful Entertainment—Sell It Hard and Cash In

Strangers of the Night

Niblo—Mayer—Metro
Length 7 Reels

DIRECTOR.....Fred Niblo

AUTHOR.....Walter Hackett's play, adapted by Bess Meredyth.

CAMERAMAN.....Alvin Wyckoff

GET 'EM IN.....Sell this hard as marvelous comedy mystery, emphasizing is adaptation of successful play.

PLEASE 'EM.....This is certainly sure-fire for any type audience because excellent comedy mystery values have been beautifully developed with very good cast.

WHOOZINIT....Matt Moore, Enid Bennett, Barbara La Marr, Robert McKim and good support.

SPECIAL APPEAL....Sell this particularly as entertainment. You can guarantee to everyone that they will thoroughly enjoy it, no matter what type of amusement they prefer.

STORY VALUES.....Although skeleton mechanics were simple, the business and lines of play were wonderful values and these have been retained with finish, an improvement over play itself for screen purposes.

TREATMENT....Production values throughout decidedly distinctive and is played with tempo building perfectly and players registering little touches effectively.

CHARACTERIZATIONS.....Moore makes central figure delightfully human. Miss Bennett does best work she has ever given screen, with Miss La Marr, McKim and other players carrying action mystery with the right speed and pause to give it a wonderful value.

ARTISTIC VALUES.....From start to finish entire production is impressive, because sets are all beautifully done, with exterior shots blending perfectly into generally pleasing whole.

Here is an entertainment knock-out.

Everywhere today you find that all types of audiences will agree to like a film that carries action, conviction as to dramatic sincerity, and a preponderance of good comedy. Basically this is a mystery melodrama if you were to read the plot. Actually, as presented on the stage, and even more so as screened, this is a comedy with every new thrill topped by a laugh that keeps the audience in a constant good humor, even to the point of thorough enthusiasm.

This is started slowly for a definite purpose. In order to get the right kick out of the final scenes it was necessary to understand in just what sort of household the amazing events were to take place. Despite the slow tempo of the early scenes the treatment and titles get enough laughs to carry it along beautifully. When the surprises start coming they are played carefully and nicely timed so that there is no confusion in the minds of the audience at any time. Developing a story of this type is a work of art to get it right, because it must build step by step to the final speed finish and if it runs too fast or too slow in the middle you lose your accumulative effect. The screen has rarely, if ever, seen as nice an example of intelligent construction as this visualization of what was a corking play. At the end they have given us a few additional stunts that register thrills and comedy that could not be shown on the stage and these carry us up to our climax much better than if they had followed the play exactly through the last act.

Matt Moore gets full value out of the character of the Englishman, who, having lived in a rut for many years, finally decides that he wants adventure, only to have it thrust upon him in chunks. Enid Bennett has done a number of big things in the past two years, but I believe that this is far and away the best thing she has ever done, because she switches from the quiet, demure little ward of Moore into the pirate cabin-boy character and then into the resourceful, quick-thinking shero in the final clash with the willuns, there being some spots like the bit where she thrusts Miss La Marr through a door and slams it that will bring down any house, purely because of the timing of the action and the little expression properly placed to point the business registered.

Bob McKim as always was a corking willun and he had good support. The gang of pirates shown in the pirate sequence was about the toughest lot of individuals I have ever seen on the screen.

Miss La Marr wore a gown throughout the film that had both northern and southern exposure and she, as always, gave a finished performance that stood out all the way, but still was held sufficiently in bounds to nicely balance with the rest of the cast.

Some of the very splendid lines from the play were used to advantage and the titles throughout were excellent. In several spots they got a great kick out of a clever bit of registering emphasis and enunciation by the manner in which the wording of the titles was printed.

You can sell this as a comedy and promise them a lot of thrills. I would play up the pirate sequence because it adds color to the offering, but make it clear that this is a modern story in which the pirate sequence is only a delightful burlesque incident.

They got a speed into the last chase stuff that was very wonderful in its effect and the thrill stuff of having Miss Bennett and other players climbing along a narrow ledge high over a precipice beside the ocean will pull some gasps from the women, with these thrills switched quickly to laughs by the clever timing of the action, whereby one after the other of the players secures possession of the much desired parchment. There is a farce speed to this action that is fine and yet they keep you believing it enough to give a touch of sincerity to the melodramatic spots.

Frederic Sullivan

Director of

"THE COURTSHIP OF MYLES STANDISH"

E. Alyn (Fred) Warren

as

Captain Myles Standish

in

"THE COURTSHIP OF MYLES STANDISH"

Enid Bennett

as

PRISCILLA

in

"THE COURTSHIP OF MYLES STANDISH"

William Sullivan

as

John Gowland

in

"The Courtship of Myles Standish"

Now under contract as featured player with Universal

Tom Wilson

as

FALLON, the mutinous pirate, in

"The Courtship of Myles Standish"

Holly 1993

"Captain Tom Jones of the Mayflower"
in
"The Courtship of Myles Standish"

STANTON HECK

Hardy in "The Bad Man"
An Edwin Carewe Production

Poggin in "The Lone Star Ranger"
with Tom Mix. Directed by
Lambert Hillyer

Holly 0391

ROBERT KORTMAN

As the Mate of the "Mayflower" and as the Indian who brought the news of the death of
Myles Standish to the Pilgrims in
"THE COURTSHIP OF MYLES STANDISH"
Garvanza 2940

Charlotte Pierce

As Mary Chilton, the first woman to set foot on the soil of the new land,
in
"The Courtship of Myles Standish"
Beacon 6659

Frank Farrington

Sir Isaac Allerton

in

"The Courtship of Myles Standish"

Phone 595-176

Musical Score for "The Courtship of Myles Standish"
Arranged by

Gertrude Ross

Composer

1000 So. Alvarado St. Telephone 51063

Robert J. Ellis

ART DIRECTOR

"The Courtship of Myles Standish"
and
"Strangers of The Night"

Hollywood Studios

The Quotation that is Known to Millions of Americans

"Why Don't You Speak for Yourself John?"

Actual Reproduction of
"The Mayflower"
Built especially for the
Charles Ray
Production

"The Courtship
of
Myles Standish"

Lookin' Out the Window in Hollywood

Many times in the past few years there have been rumors that the De Mille brothers, "C. B. and "Bill" were about to break with Paramount. I believe that now the break is coming. I would certainly not be in the least surprised to see the De Mille boys lined up with the United Artists group before the winter is over. That would be a move of exceptional importance, because every shifting of the balance of production strength calls for a readjustment all along the line. I believe we will see some production affiliation changes this fall and winter that will be more important than any the industry has ever had in any single season.

———o———

You will recall that I mentioned the coming of a wonderful new plan in the selling of special films. From what I see in the cards I believe the plan will be put into operation this winter. It is remarkably simple, exceptionally practical and efficient and just automatically takes care of a lot of the problems that have been worrying producers, distributors and exhibitors in the past. I can't tell you just when it will be presented to you, but I certainly think from all indications that you will hear all about it this fall.

———o———

They say the exhibitors are not signing contracts for big blocks of films this year. You'll notice I wrote it, "they say." No one but the actual bosses of the various sales organizations know the facts and they won't tell. But the quantity of discussion about the matter indicates that maybe it's so. Anyway, it is interesting. If true, it is going to call forth some remarkable developments. This condition never really existed in the past.

———o———

They have been stopped cold in New York this fall by an active discussion of the fact that the "season" doesn't really start in September. In other words, they realize with a genuine bang, apparently for the first time, that the great majority of the theatre owners don't get the fine new fall films until months after New York has forgotten all about them. Right there is where I hit on a wonderful idea in presenting "Wid's Quarterly." The Weekly trade paper carries the announcement of the new films to the big first run and chain men; yes, that's fine, but three months later when 80% of the theatres are thinking about those films, the weekly paper is talking about an entirely new lot of films. Do you get it, clearly? Wid's Quarterly, the four-times-a-year bound volume of Wid's Weekly, goes to the 10,000 theatres who are interested in the older films, and stays on their desks and is constantly used until they play the films. That's something the industry has always needed. It offers the medium to keep the old films alive.

———o———

My good friend, C. A. Lick, down in Ft. Smith, Ark., runs a fine theatre and sells theatre tickets to theatre men. His firm, Weldon, Williams and Lick, have been top-notchers in the theatre ticket line for years and years. "C. A." tells me that the "reserved seat" era is sweeping the country. That's fine and nothing could be better for everyone in the industry than the permanent establishment of a policy of "right prices for real entertainment" varied in accordance with the quality of the offering and reserved seats for all special attractions so that the real spenders of your community can know that they are sure to have seats if they wish to come down to your theatre.

———o———

The Hollywood News gave me a couple of columns on how my review of the "Hunchback" caused the film to be re-edited and how Universal thanked me for making them look it over more carefully. "The Hunchback" has caused an awful lot of discussion here on the Coast.

———o———

H. O. Davis, formerly at Universal and Triangle, is the new general manager of Hearst's film interests. That's important. "H. O." has always been a real student of this business. For some time he has been associated confidentially with Hearst. Hearst is to be congratulated for having placed Mr. Davis in charge.

———o———

Fourteen million theatre admissions in the Los Angeles district in August. That's the accurate government check-up. Practically half a million a day is "some business."

Awful Movie Meller With One of Those Storm Things at End

Thundering Dawn

A Harry Garson Production—Universal

Length 8 Reels

DIRECTOR.....Harry Garson

AUTHOR.....John Blackwood

CAMERAMAN.....Lou Physioc

GET 'EM IN.....Don't try to attract anyone except lovers of very cheap meller.

PLEASE 'EM.....Everything in the plot is "for no good reason," with wild storm finish. Just another of those things. Only lovers of rip-en-tear could enjoy this.

WHOOZINIT.....Anna Q. Nillson, Jack Kerrigan, Winifred Bryson, Tom Santschi, Eddie Burns and Richard Kean.

SPECIAL APPEAL.....Nothing to sell but the storm and it is just movie thriller.

STORY VALUES.....There is absolutely no intelligent reason given for anything done after they get this well under way. It's just plain meller action without explanation, rhyme or reason.

TREATMENT.....After a reel and a half of straight prologue they step into wild meller in Java, finishing with storm spectacle. Never for a minute was it anything but crude movie.

CHARACTERIZATIONS.....Nillson and Kerrigan were smothered by meller action and other players. The overacting at times was pathetic.

ARTISTIC VALUES.....There were some good bits of composition, but cheapness of plot situations and crude exaggeration of acting discounted all production values.

Someone sure must have slipped Universal the thought that wild meller is what the poor public want. Surely this is wild. The worst of this is you never get quite clear exactly why the players are all so wild. Anyone who knows why they do what they do is a better man than I am Gordon gin. Winifred Bryson, who is not a bit hard to look at in the few moments that she is in repose, is made to do a vamp in this that is just about what Louise Fazenda might do if she were presenting a tip-top meller burlesque under the direction of Eddie Cline. Winifred puts her hands on her hips and sways as she walks in just about every shot where she gets footage enough to move about and the manner in which this character is visualized serves as a keynote to register the general tone of this entire production.

They finish it all off with a reel or so of wild storm stuff with players doing marathons hither and yon, but with all the running around in circles I don't believe that even the most rabid meller fans will really become excited.

They spend a reel and a half in the beginning to establish that Kerrigan foolishly assumes the guilt of a criminal act which he thinks his father has committed. J. Warren goes off to Java, leaving nice Anna Q. pining at home. When J. Warren hits Java, willunous Tom Santschi for some unknown reason turns him over to a mysterious personage, played by Richard Kean, to be made into a derelict. We have a lot of footage in which Miss Bryson as the vamp works hard to keep Warren as her slave, but we never find out why Santschi and Kean, the willuns, are so anxious to make a bum out of our hero.

Pining Anna decides that Jack's letters have a different tone, so she sails away to Java to discover the cause. Of course Anna falls into the clutches of willunous Tom and when the storm comes Jack becomes a man again and eventually saves her from the desperate schemers.

Apparently the whole thing has been hung together for no good reason except the staging of a lot of storm stuff which is labelled a typhoon. I am under the impression that they never have typhoons in Java, but that doesn't matter because they could just as well have called this location anything from Korea to India insofar as the fans who might be interested in it will care. Anyone who might know for sure that they don't have typhoons in Java will be sore on the show long before they get to the typhoon and probably will never stay to see it.

They mug and overact on the least provocation in this and the efforts of Miss Nillson and Kerrigan, when they get a chance, go for naught because they are really held down to an insignificant value by the whirl of atmosphere, plotting, and storm effect that go towards making this one of those movie things. It may be possible that there is an element of our population that cares for this sort of very wild melodrama. I suppose that this is not any wilder than many of our serials and they do stand for the serials, although I personally think that folks consider serials as 50% comedy, getting as many laughs as they do kicks out of the thrilling melodrama. Certainly I would advise you very strongly against playing this in any house where you have a discriminating community audience that expects you to deliver good sensible entertainment.

The idea of building a picture up to a final storm spectacle is perfectly alright, but it should not require a terrific amount of brains to give some reasonable, tangible explanation as to why the principle characters do the things which they are shown doing. This whole story is centered around the making of Kerrigan into a bum, practically held as a prisoner and there is absolutely no reason registered at any time for the willuns doing this.

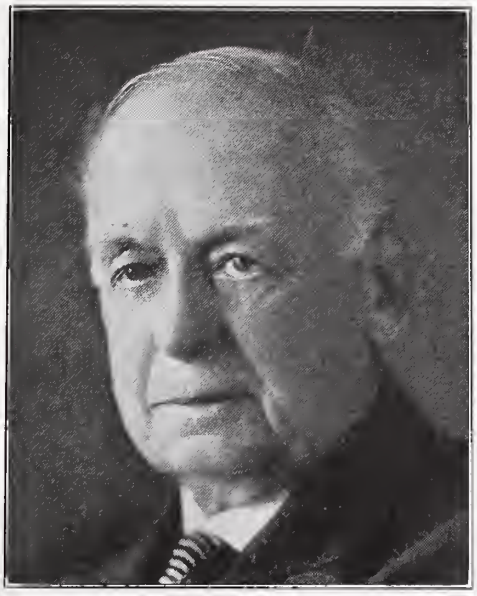
Miss Bryson is really rather an attractive young lady, but the manner in which she proves that she is "some wamp" is simply bloody awful. I claim that this is absolutely the director's fault. Santschi does the regulation willun and Richard Kean, as a mysterious personage, would really have a good characterization if you ever found out why he was mysterious.

Bert Woodruff

"Children of Dust"
First National
Directed by
Frank Borzage

"Daddy"
First National
Directed by
E. Mason Hopper

"Silent Partner"
Lasky
Directed by
Charles Maigne



"Isle of Lost Ships"
First National
Directed by
Maurice Tourneur

"Six-Fifty"
Universal
Directed by
Nat Ross

"Eagle Feather"
Metro
Directed by
Ted Sloman

Phone 595-773

Gertrude Short

"Topsy St. John"
Warner Bros.
"Gold Diggers"
Directed by
Harry Beaumont

"Paula"
"The Man That Life Passed By"
Metro
Directed by
Victor Schertzinger

Holly 1713

Has Fine Values But Editing Would Improve it Wonderfully

Little Old New York

Cosmopolitan—Goldwyn
Length 10 Reels

DIRECTOR.....Sidney Olcott

AUTHOR.....Rida Johnson Young's stage play, adapted by Luther Reed.

CAMERAMAN.....Ira H. Morgan

GET 'EM IN.....Hearst exploitation establishes this as big special so that it will pull business.

PLEASE 'EM....There is tremendous lot of very good stuff in this, but it is entirely too long, sags in the middle and drags fearfully with unnecessary retrospect at the end. It is good entertainment despite its length and will please generally.

WHOOZINIT.....Marion Davies, Harrison Ford and good cast, but not well known on screen.

SPECIAL APPEAL.....There is great value here in fact story presents as characters, famous founders of American fortunes as they lived in the early days of New York. Historical slant gives this value as big special.

STORY VALUES.....Plot of play had simple mechanics, but much delightful business which has been retained in screen presentation.

TREATMENT.....After getting away to a very good start this sags badly. Steamboat trial and prize fight sequence pull it up wonderfully, but trial scene, and retrospect at end drop it badly.

CHARACTERIZATIONS.....Miss Davies gives by far best performance to date, and supporting cast is excellent down to the smallest bits.

ARTISTIC VALUES.....Production is decidedly distinctive all the way with atmosphere of early New York thoroughly established. Studio shots of Ireland and painted drop back of medium shots of principals on boat were only production bits that did not impress.

There is no question about this being a real special. There was a corking little love story here and it has been nicely transferred to the screen. The play was a success because of this little love story and because famous Americans like Astor, Vanderbilt, Washington Irving, Delmonico and others were brought into the action as characters. In the screen visualization they have been able to successfully present the early New York atmosphere while keeping the players registering as human beings whose emotions you are in sympathy with.

The basic fault with this as it stands, is length. There is a spot before the steamboat trial where the story has slumped, and the steamboat sequence could be shortened to splendid advantage. At the end of the picture they give you a long retrospect explaining how the star happened to be masquerading as a boy. Actually no audience cares how she happened to be masquerading. As a matter of fact our story is all over and ready for the quickest ending when Miss Davies appears before the other characters dressed as a girl. It is too bad that they have dragged in so much explanatory retrospect at the end, because it will certainly tire any audience and consequently offset to a definite extent the favorable impression that has been made by other splendid sequences in the film. The storm stuff in the retrospect is good, but it has been done in many other films and is absolutely not needed in this. The same thing goes for the trial scene at the end.

This production is an absolute triumph for Miss Davies. There is no disputing the fact that many have questioned Miss Davies' position as a star. In this offering she not only registers as a beautiful young lady, but manages to get over some splendid moments in comedy bits, with several spots where her dramatic trouping certainly rings true.

There is a very good supporting cast, with all of the parts nicely balanced. At all times Miss Davies is given the center of the picture, as was entirely proper, since the play was built around that one character, just as much as "Peg o' My Heart" was built around the character of "Peg."

The prize fight scene was certainly the high spot of the play. Sid Olcott has gotten all the value out of this and has made it one of the best comedy sequences that has ever been filmed. This sequence alone will win any audience.

Certainly this film should be reduced in footage. If it were carefully edited, the production would be tremendously improved, because all of the values could be retained and their relative effect would be wonderfully heightened by the betterance of the tempo through the elimination of the footage, which now so radically detracts from the general effect.

In its present form most anyone will agree that there is real entertainment values in the offering, but at the same time they will have a feeling that it is too long, and they will not have the same enthusiastic reaction that would result if this were pulled down to proper footage by the elimination of the spots which do not register as they should.

From a production viewpoint the values are splendid. The atmosphere of early New York is thoroughly established at once, but I believe it was a mistake to shoot the scenes supposed to be in Ireland in a studio, because the general lighting and photographic effect was so similar to the studio scenes of early New York, that you did not clearly get a sense of actually being moved mentally to Ireland. During the trial of the steamboat sequence there is some bad matching of action. For no reason at all we find that all of the crowds of guests on the boat have suddenly moved away to permit the story principals to do a few scenes. The back-drop used in the studio boat shots was also noticeably a back-drop, so that there was a sharp reaction in switching from the studio shots to the long shots taken out on the river.

Harry Watson, one of our famous comedians of the theatre, whom you probably remember from the old team of Bickel and Watson, gave marvelous comedy values to the prize fight sequence. Other well-known players from the theatre helped a lot in giving this the dramatic dignity that it has.

Marshall Ruth

Two years Fox comedies

COMING RELEASE:

"Second Hand Love"—for Fox

Phone Drexel 6894 or 289-026

Charles Cruz

Coming Release: Juvenile Lead
in
"You Can't Get Away With It"
Directed by Rowland V. Lee
Holly 5146

Jack Earle

as
"The Giant"
in
"Jack and the Beanstalk"
Holly 1062

Gloria In Jazzed Treatment of Famous Character

ZAZA

Paramount
Length 7 Reels

DIRECTOR.....Alan Dwan

AUTHOR.....From the play by Pierre Berton and Charles Simon, adapted by Albert Shelby Levino.

CAMERAMAN..... Hal Rosson

GET 'EM IN.....Sets and idea of star in jazz, theatrical, character should pull good business.

PLEASE 'EM.....As it runs they may enjoy it, but when it's over they'll have an empty feeling.

WHOOZINIT....Gloria Swanson, H. B. Warner, Mary Thurman and good cast.

SPECIAL APPEAL.....Play up that this is modern, jazzy, version of famous classic.

STORY VALUES.....Situations don't really hit you since everything is concentrated around star's characterization.

TREATMENT.....Production values are excellent. It amuses at times but misses emotionally.

CHARACTERIZATIONS.....Star does Zaza as Tanguay might, with touches here and there of Kiki. Warner dignifies many moments. Thurman is good foil for star. Miss La Verne and Gottschalk register effective comedy relief at times.

ARTISTIC VALUES....Entire production is pleasing to the eye. Most of photography excellent, with composition and lightings generally very good.

Most of the populace have no idea as to what Zaza might be all about, but somewhere they have heard the name and consequently will probably be interested in seeing what they have done with it on the screen. Gloria plays it wildly enough to hold anyone's attention. That's certain.

The plot skeleton is very simple. Most of the footage is given up to the star and the registering of her interpretation of "Zaza." Gloria starts off in the theatre sequence working very much as anyone would expect Eva Tanguay to work in this character. A little later Gloria swings more toward Lenore Ulric's characterization of "Kiki." After this character has been established the picture flops because they fail to get to any dramatic highspots that are sufficiently different or emotionally effective enough to lift it out of the rut.

The very first shot of Gloria shows her throwing clothes all over the dressing room with titles stating that she is registering either "temper or temperament." Throughout a good part of the film the public is given an opportunity to see what some producers have to put up with when their unruly favorites turn loose. From that viewpoint it is interesting.

The entire music hall sequence, running through almost half of the film, is good entertainment because it is different in atmosphere and moves along at a good speed. They do stretch things a bit broad here and there, doing a couple of slapstick stunts such as having Gloria use her hatpin on Mary Thurman through the curtain while Mary is performing and in another place having Gloria start to kick a lady in her western extremity, hesitating at just the moment that Ben Turpin might in the same act.

H. B. Warner gives a splendid performance. H. B. has that finished art of holding your attention by doing nothing. His poise and his knowledge of the value of pauses lifted his dramatic moments very decidedly. He brought a touch of dignity that almost made it good serious drama at times.

Lucille LaVerne and Ferdinand Gottschalk worked right through the action from start to finish, providing comedy relief that was neatly blended and generally registered very nicely.

They had Mary Thurman working in a blonde wig. Most of the time Mary looked very good, but there were one or two close-ups that were very bad shots. Mary had several battles with Gloria during the progress of the film. In one of these battles she lost her wig. These two girls fought so hard at one time that Mary came out of the mix-up with little on but a checkered table cloth which she snatched from the table as the last of her clothes were jerked from her back by Gloria.

I think most audiences will get considerable enjoyment out of this as it goes along, but this one belongs in that unfortunate class that drops pretty flat in the finish, with the result that they get a chance to sit back and think a little before leaving the theatre, so that as they go out they have rather an empty feeling of having looked at something that meant nothing.

I don't believe that you will have many very serious complaints on this except from folks who want stories that have emotional value. Gloria tries in a few places to get down to serious trouping, but really doesn't make it. I would say that you can safely play this because it should get money and if you will carefully key your advertising there should not be any opportunity for an audience kick-back. Make it a point in your ads to explain that this is a modern version of Zaza, emphasizing particularly that it is really a characterization study registering how Miss Swanson interprets this famous character that has been done by some of our greatest actresses of the theatre. They start off in one of the first titles by telling us about Réjane, Dusé, Carter, Farrar and others having done this part with the statement that now we get a modern visualization. You can present the same idea if you will carefully explain that Gloria's Zaza might properly be called "Jazz-a," because there is the modern pep injected into her presentation. It is rather important that you make this point in your advertising because if you gather together people who want jazz, they will probably like this, whereas a group of fans expecting serious, emotional, drama will almost pass out on you when they see the manner in which this has been visualized.

Directors and Stars Must be Mentally Alert to Succeed

Do you know what it means to come down to the job in the morning with that "spring fever" feeling that makes you wish the day was over, and you look upon the task before you as a "blue Monday" grind?

Well, it's very likely that you are undergoing a temporary attack of mental inertia, caused by a physical slump.

But what a satisfaction it is to land on the job with a tingle of pleasure and expectancy at the huge volume of work that is waiting. You say "lead me to it" and you astonish your companions and surprise yourself by your pep and untiring energy.

This means that your brain is naturally in its stride, "hitting on all six," just as it normally does in everyone who is ambitious and determined to advance.

Now you are mentally alert. And you are mentally alert because you are physically fit. Wouldn't it boost you quickly to the top if you could depend on feeling physically fit and mentally alert for the rest of your life?

You can! By taking my Scientific Adjustments.

Dr. W. I. Schuster

Scientific Chiropractor and Nerve Specialist
(Palmer Graduate) Licensed in California

A Health Service right at your door. Save your time and strength by avoiding the downtown rush

Office Hours:
10 to 12 and 2 to 5

Monday, Wednesday and Friday
6 to 8 P. M.
LADY IN ATTENDANCE

203 Bogardus Bldg.
Cor. Sunset and Western
Hollywood, Calif.

Telephone 436-724
PRIVATE DRESSING ROOMS

Formula Plot Poorly Done—It Just Don't Register

Held to Answer

Metro

Length 5 Reels

DIRECTOR.....Harold Shaw

AUTHOR.....Peter Clarke MacFarlane's story, adapted by Winifred Dunn.

CAMERAMAN.....George Rizard

GET 'EM IN.....Can see no b. o. value except House Peters' name.

PLEASE 'EM.....This is mechanical movie that never impresses and frequently is quite tiresome.

WHOOZINIT.....House Peters, Evelyn Brent, Jimmie Morrison, Lydia Knott, John Sainpolis and Grace Carlyle.

SPECIAL APPEAL.....Situations lack novelty. There is no exploitation slant.

STORY VALUES.....Strong man shields weakling brother of girl he loves. Certainly not a new idea.

TREATMENT.....They never make you believe it. Production values are only fair. Lacks any redeeming qualities.

CHARACTERIZATIONS.....Jimmie Morrison's weakling good. Other characters don't impress. Miss Carlyle a flop.

ARTISTIC VALUES.....Composition and lighting lacked distinctive touch. Settings did not impress.

This is very, very ordinary. It may possibly sneak by as a routine program offering, but even in that classification you will probably find many who consider it a weak sister.

The story is that well-known situation of strong man hero who, when accused of a crime committed by another, stands erect to shield the weakling criminal because the weakling is the brother of the girl he loves. Of course, when they get through chewing up the scenery the weakling steps forth to confess, and everyone is happy. We even find in this that the weakling's mother is glad to hear his confession, because she thinks that time-honored thought that having the strength to confess has made him a man.

House Peters is the dominant minister who has established a great following by his sermons, and Grace Carlyle is an actress out of his past. House has little to do but walk through the action and look strong and silent, but Miss Carlyle attempts to troupe with such regularity that her acting makes a very bad impression. Miss Carlyle does not screen well, and understands so little of screen technique that the impression which she makes is thoroughly unfavorable.

Evelyn Brent is the sweet young thing loved by Mr. Peters, and Evelyn gets through with flying colors because she confines her efforts to being easy to look at. She has been well photographed in most all of her shots, and does make a favorable impression.

Jimmie Morrison does the weakling in a manner that almost gets you now and then, but the shortcomings of the production in other ways are such a handicap that Jimmie's work really doesn't hit.

Lydia Knott as the sweet old mother and John Sainpolis as her hard-guy husband round out the cast. Bull Montana sticks around through some of the action for no good reason, except that in the courtroom scene Bull marches up and tries to shoulder the guilt when Mr. Peters proclaims his innocence but refuses to name the guilty man.

If any real conclusive proof was needed to impress upon anyone the fact that this is just a routine movie, they pull it when a couple of detectives do the customary bit of interviewing some ladies without removing their hats. Right then the last word was said as to where this should be classified.

They did not attempt to vary the formula in any degree in making this one. The story may have listened pretty well as written by Mr. MacFarlane. When visualized on the screen it is pitifully weak. Having Jimmie Morrison steal the jewels and then conveniently plant them in the safe of the minister was sure reaching a long way to bring about a situation.

About the only bit in the entire film which made any impression whatever was the touch where the organist, who had previously been ordered away from the organ by the willun, got up and started to play entirely on his own volition, following the confession of Jimmie Morrison, which vindicated our hero in the big church scene at the end of the production.

I can't see any reason why you should decide to play this. There is no exploitation slant that justifies your making a noise about it in a way that would give you a possible out when your gang didn't like it, and I feel pretty certain that most any crowd will consider this as a production that ranks far below the ordinary program routine.

There is no distinctive characterization that stands out. There is no unusual situation which really impresses. Miss Carlyle, who is in a way the central figure, since surely she is the menace of the plot, weakens the entire offering by failing utterly to get her stuff across. Throughout there is entirely too much acting, and at no time do the players manage to make you believe it sufficiently to register any single situation or piece of business.

When they started this off it looked as though we might get an interesting character development showing good contrasts between those who do good for the joy they get out of doing good and those who press-agent their charity activities and give a certain amount of time and money to religious work in order to be hailed as pillars of the church. This characterization contrast was lost in the shuffle, however, and the film became just a routine mechanical narrative, having to do with situations that were obvious and not particularly interesting. There was a terrific lot of walking in and out, most of the players having what I call good pedestrian parts.

I believe it will be entirely advisable to forget this one entirely.

William Lowery

Recent and Coming Releases:

The High Sheriff of Nottingham in "Robin Hood"

"MacGuire of the Big Snows"

"Why Do We Live"

"The Man in the Raw"

"Why Women Remarry"

"The Dangerous Trail"

A LETTER I VALUE HIGHLY

I honor Mr. Wm. Lowery as one of the best actors I have ever come in contact with. He has been with me for the last five years and during that time has assisted me in many ways in addition to playing many good parts.

I recommend him for any line of work and regret very much that he has found it necessary to leave this company, for in addition to the above qualifications Mr. Lowery is very industrious, a hard worker and can be relied upon at any time.

Sincerely,

(Signed) D. W. GRIFFITH.

They Get Too Close To It!

Any director or producing unit working actively in the making of a film is handicapped when it comes to the final editing.

They have been too close to it.

Frequently, when a production has been finished, a fresh mind can come into the projection room and suggest changes that will bring wonderful improvements to the production.

We can give you that sort of service.

Do you want your productions carefully checked before they are shipped, or are you thoroughly satisfied that they can't be improved?

PLAY DEPARTMENT

HARRY H. LICHTIG

Holly 1068 6372 Hollywood Blvd.

Wid's Weekly

Vol. I. No. 21 Saturday. October 20, 1923 Price 25c

Copyright, 1923, by Wid's Weekly

Published Weekly at
6411 Hollywood Blvd.,
Hollywood, Calif.

Editor - - - - - - - - - - - - Wid Gunning

Subscription $10.00 one year in United States; Foreign $15.00.
Subscribers should remit with order.

Editorial and Business Offices
6411 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood, Calif.
Phone Holly 1062

New York Representative: Merrit Crawford
Room 1503, 25 West 45th St. Phone Bryant 4174.
You will be interested in talking with Mr. Crawford regarding the combined circulation of Wid's Weekly and Wid's Quarterly.

Forcing Better Films

An important crisis is here. The real pictures are going to make tremendous profits this year. The ordinary pictures and the companies handling them are in hot water.

The signs of the times are bringing indications of difficulties. Many explanations are forthcoming as to the whyfor of what's going on.

There is just one important fact that is responsible for the condition which is today confronting the industry. That fact is the unusual condition developed this year of the theatre owners having finally commenced to operate their business on a common-sense basis. The theatre owners are not buying blocks of films in advance. They are buying carefully and slowly. That has disrupted many organizations that have lived through the years under the old system.

For a long time now there have been heated discussions each spring and summer regarding the awful curse of block booking or program booking. Elaborate resolutions have been presented and passed with cheers at the exhibitor conventions. Mr. Exhibitor, however, promptly returned to his home and booked a lot of product on "paper promises."

It takes several years in this industry for ideas to filter through to a point of being actually put into practice. I believe that the Paramount people sensed more rapidly than the others the fact that this year was going to be a tough year for program or block booking. Possibly they also realized that several other organizations would be able this season to present a list of anywhere from twelve to thirty attractions that would on paper look as good as the list offered by Paramount. Anyway, Paramount, which organization is more strongly entrenched financially than any of the others, threw a real monkey wrench into the machinery when they pulled the announcement that they would discontinue all block and program booking.

The crisis has come through the fact that companies who have depended upon the taking of millions of dollars in advance contracts have been unable this year to do so. In the past these contracts have been collateral that could be used in securing finances with which to proceed with additional productions. As a matter of actuality these contracts were frequently of very little value because for the most part they did not carry play dates. A contract for the booking of thirty films without specified play dates would be the same as selling a lot of shoes to a retail shoe man without having any specified date for the delivery of the goods or the payment for same. Such a contract would certainly mean little. Nevertheless, in the past rather extensive financing has been accomplished by virtue of these no play date contracts.

This should be clearly understood. The industry is in a more healthy condition than it has ever been. The theatres are doing more

Reviews This Week

HER REPUTATION—Ince-Assoc. Exch.

THE NEAR LADY—Universal

IN SEARCH OF A THRILL—Metro

THE MEANEST MAN IN THE WORLD —First National

business in dollars and cents than they have ever done. There is absolutely nothing wrong with conditions except that we have come to that very important point where it is getting to be a tough job to automatically make money with an ordinary or a poor film. That is really a most wonderfully encouraging condition for everyone that has any real ability in this industry.

There has been in the past month or two a temporary checking of production activity. There may be a lull through the next month, although production activities are already increasing. We will have a change in the complexion of the market which is not unusual in this rapidly moving business, but what makes this particular change so important is the fact that it is a change towards greater returns for good films and rather poor returns for bad films.

The good films that have been made in the past year are beginning to roll in splendid returns. As this money comes in the producers will immediately swing into the making of other good films. The marvelous success of these good films will point the way for the making of more real productions and the financial interests will see definitely for the first time this year that the days of automatic success for ordinary films are rapidly dwindling.

Directors, authors and players who are capable of delivering the particularly worth-while quality of work that makes for screen success will find in the coming months a better opportunity than they have ever known. The producers will be more anxious than ever to make sure-fire stuff. They will be willing to pay real money in order to make sure-fire productions because the worth-while films are bringing the big returns.

It may become more difficult for many people who have worked in the making of ordinary films under machine methods to get by. I cannot feel that the industry is suffering by this condition. It has always been faulty to have a market condition that made it possible for poor films to automatically succeed. Those workers who have been employed in the making of the ordinary and the poor films, who really have genuine personal ability, will find that they can go on up more rapidly under this new state of affairs.

In the making of big productions it is suicide for producers to permit incompetent persons to clutter up the machinery and for that reason the next few months will see a weeding-out process that will eliminate many of the friends and relatives who have been holding down important jobs because of a personal situation rather than because of a definite ability to make good.

This fall is the first time that the New York distributors have ever felt a genuine jolt on advance bookings. Always in the past they have been able to make some sort of showing of contracts, even though those contracts at times had little actual value. If the worth-while films were not doing so wonderfully well and if the theatres were not playing to such wonderful business, there might be something to worry about. But with this industry moving into the era of playing the big productions at prices befitting those productions, with the reserve seat policy sweeping the country like wildfire, the temporary check on the finances of some distributors is really a splendid state of affairs if for no other reason than the fact that they will be forced in the future to the handling of worth-while films if they hope to continue to function.

There have been some wild statements this year about the fact that more money has been spent on production than can be taken in. Those statements are fearfully misleading. We have never in this industry had enough good films. We have never had good films that have been real financial failures. There have been some artistic efforts that lacked box office appeal which have fallen short of the profits anticipated, but they have not registered any serious losses.

We have always had too much production. We have always had too much inferior production. We have continued year after year to have too much inferior production because it has been possible for certain organizations to continue to function even though they delivered product of an inferior quality. No one can be really hurt by the coming of this year's jolt which definitely makes the issue that an inferior film may be a financial failure.

The slow buying on the part of the theatre owners this fall has brought to a head a situation that has been frantically called for for many years. The act of Paramount in announcing a policy of individual booking was very important in forcing the issue because where hundreds and even thousands of exhibitors might have still been on the fence men-

tally as to whether or not they would book a quantity of films in advance, their minds were made up for them by the Paramount announcement. It must be remembered that 80 per cent of the exhibitors do not play the new fall films until after the first of the year. When the companies were able to go out in the early fall months and make contracts for films to be played as far in advance as the next summer, they had apparent assets. With the situation as it stands now, where the theatre owners are sitting back waiting to book films approximately only thirty days in advance, the market becomes a genuine survival of the fittest.

Many very interesting developments will come in the next few months. Exactly which organizations will be able to weather the storm financially cannot be foretold. There is no reason, however, for anyone with ability to be anything but pleased with conditions, because the theatres are crying for good product and are willing to pay good prices for good films. That means that good films will be made, and in the making of good films the capable people receive more money and more people are employed, because in making good films a tremendously longer time must be used, therefore making it necessary to employ additional units in the operation of turning out these productions.

The chief sufferers will be the hundreds and hundreds of folks who have been employed in the making of films that have been ground out very rapidly. It is unfortunate that there will be a let-up in some of this activity in the production of mediocre product, but, after all, the coming of that condition was becoming inevitable and it really will in the end be a very beneficial change.

I have had a number of people ask me regarding the situation this fall and they seem to be quite at sea regarding conditions. For that reason I have gone into detail regarding this state of affairs, which is not in the least mysterious, but is not generally understood by those unfamiliar with the method of operating the selling end of this industry.

E. Alyn (Fred) Warren

"As Is"

Not the "type" he makes 'em

E. Alyn (Fred) Warren

as Father Abraham

in

"HUNGRY HEARTS"

Mr. George A. Billings, who does Lincoln in "The Dramatic Life of Abraham Lincoln," had never "acted." He has been good enough to say that the success which he will achieve in this film is due to my direction.

Phil Rosen

"Equipment" Becomes a Leading Man

The advances that have come in the past two or three years in the matter of production costs have brought a new situation. The heads of producing organizations today must keep keenly alert checking up "equipment."

When directors spend as much in a day's shooting as the company once spent on an entire production, then it's time for the boss who signs the checks to figure out whether the "equipment" being used is 100 per cent plus.

Equipment is as important in the making of films today as it is in the making of automobiles.

The right sort of equipment saves time, and there is nothing as valuable as time when production overhead is running into the thousands by the hour.

The most simple stories must be perfectly photographed and lighted. The more simple the dramatic action, the more important it is to have everything mechanical in perfect accord.

Few realize how tremendously important it is for the director to be able to photograph at just the instant he gets his players keyed up to a situation.

If you know studio talk, you know what it means when they talk about "getting into it."

Some players require more rehearsals than others. Some artists feel a situation one minute and get out of it in a flash if distracted.

The producer who really values his dollars and is seeking a way to intelligently "economize" should spend so much money on "equipment" of the most improved type that his companies will never "miss the moments" when real drama can be caught.

Millions and millions have been lost through the use of equipment that halted the playing of a scene just when the director was ready to shoot. An interruption at the critical moment, caused by poor equipment, frequently means an hour, and sometimes several hours, getting the players "tuned up again."

A lot of noise is made now and then about "economy." The greatest economy that can possibly be practiced by any producing organization is the immediate expenditure of a lot of money to secure perfect technical equipment of the most improved type.

Think it over, Mr. Producer.

Mario Carillo

JUST FINISHED
"Dust of Desire" with Norma Talmadge
for Joseph Schenck

Phone 567-182

McAvoy, Flood and Fire Help This But It Gets Wild

Her Reputation

Ince—First National
Length 7 Reels

DIRECTOR.....John Griffith Wray

AUTHOR.....From the story by Talbot Mundy and Bradley King, adapted by Bradley King.

CAMERAMAN.....Henry Sharp

GET 'EM IN.....Title, cast and meller spectacle should have good pulling power.

PLEASE 'EM.....This is wild, but interesting—will probably prove satisfactory entertainment to most folks because it has plenty of action and pleasing Miss McAvoy.

WHOOZINIT....May McAvoy, Lloyd Hughes, Brinsley Shaw, George Larkin, James Corrigan, Louise Lester, Winter Hall, Eric Mayne and Casson Ferguson.

SPECIAL APPEAL.....There is exploitation theme in argument against sensational and unscrupulous newspapers.

STORY VALUES.....There was splendid idea and good action sequences, but it became too strenuous and somewhat faulty in construction at the end.

TREATMENT.....Players are given opportunity to get personalities across and spectacular stuff is effectively done. Generally, production values are very good.

CHARACTERIZATIONS.....Miss McAvoy was excellent as persecuted shero. Other players did their duty, as they saw it, quite nobly.

ARTISTIC VALUES.....There were some very effective shots and both flood and fire scenes were very well done.

As one young lady said, coming out of the theatre, "Well, she sure had a lot of trouble."

They opened this up showing Miss McAvoy suffering mental tortures as she read a sensational newspaper story about herself, and from that time on she was very much the persecuted shero until they got to the clutch.

There was a good idea back of this. Most folks will be in hearty sympathy with the shero all the way. They dressed it up with some good spectacular stuff. They kept it moving and provided plenty of complications. Folks who like action should certainly get as much as they care for in any one evening. Towards the end they sort of hop, skip and jump to get to their situations, with some titles that didn't quite cover the gaps, but by that time it has become a bit unreal, anyway, and so they won't matter to the critical fans, and the others will be perfectly satisfied with the forest fire, not worrying about how all the characters were able to get together in the forest.

Falsely heralded as a vampire by a sensational reporter, Miss McAvoy is driven to become a masked cabaret dancer in the clutches of a foreigner who loves her. She is finally rescued by the son of the owner of the newspaper that has been chiefly responsible for her being labeled as an impossible person. It was melodrama most of the way, but Miss McAvoy was so sweet and beautiful that she gets her appeal across enough to hold this reasonably within bounds even in the wilder jumpy sequences at the end.

They start you off with May's introduction and then show a flash of the Stone Age and then a flash of Mr. Guttenberg inventing the printing press to bring home the fact, I presume, that the first guy who wrote something on a rock was responsible for our shero's trials and tribulations.

After the establishing of the theme down through the ages, we jumped into a retrospect showing a fiesta celebrating the coming marriage of Miss McAvoy and an old guy played by Eric Mayne who for some reason seemed to think that he couldn't leave May his money unless he married her. Anyway, Casson Ferguson, who loved May, shot Mayne where it made him curl up and die, and then killed himself, after Brinsley Shaw, as the inquiring reporter, had stepped into the room. Shaw couldn't get an interview from Miss McAvoy and so wrote a wild story about her.

They followed this with some splendid spectacular stuff showing the breaking of a levee which swept shero and her nurse down the river, where May was finally rescued by Lloyd Hughes, the two establishing themselves in a floating barn. They used a lot of animals in this sequence and a good gag of a coon reaching for a chicken as the two floated down the stream together. Probably the greatest jolt in the whole offering came in this very good sequence, however, when they gave Lloyd Hughes a terrible title as he stepped up on the roof of the barn and found Miss McAvoy there. For no reason at all, he said, "A woman! Can't a fellow even drown by himself?" This was very much all wet. Lloyd was supposed to be sore on women because his mother had left his father, but just the same a young man as susceptible as he proved himself to be soon after would hardly have pulled that sort of speech.

The love development between Hughes and Miss McAvoy in the barn was very good. From the time of the rescue and through the scenes in San Francisco where May was discovered as a cabaret dancer, the action became more and more straight meller. When they pulled a raid by the police and May was sent to the city editor's cabin in the mountains, there must have been some slip in construction because they had to title the action to show the reporter deciding that she had gone to the old guy's cabin in the mountains just because a little child told him that she had gone away with the old guy. This was making Shaw a little bit too much of a bloodhound. It was equally as bad for the old editor to immediately know that Shaw had decided to go to the cabin to look for her when he discovered that the child had told him that May had gone away with him. It would seem that there was no place in the world that this nice old newspaper man might take a young lady except to his cabin in the mountains.

J. Warren Kerrigan

as

"Hollingworth Chase"

in

"The Man From Brodneys"

Glen Cavender

as

"Selim"

in

"The Man From Brodneys"

Glen Cavender

"Character Heavies"

Phone 577-742

Bertram Grassby

as

"Rasula"

in

"The Man From Brodneys"

Lookin' Out the Window in Hollywood

The big boss of Universal, Carl Laemmle, is here. Probably no one man in the industry is better liked personally than Mr. Laemmle. There has always been a certain amount of political friction in a big organization like Universal City, but when it comes to the big boss himself, everyone is for him. Carl has been on a very interesting trip to Europe.

Paramount has announced 21 new films "to be shown after November 1st." "The Ten Commandments" was not included, although DeMille's present production, "Triumph," was listed. Apparently the big C. B. spectacle doesn't fit into the regular list. Maybe that means exclusive road shows.

The retirement of Al Lichtman from the business as a distributor was an important piece of news. Ben Shulberg announces that he will place all the product that has been made on the straight state right franchise plan, immediately discontinuing all of the offices that have been conducted by Preferred pictures as their own exchanges.

Harry Weber, the real king of personal representatives in the vaudeville game, is back in California again. Harry sorta likes our climate out here. Recently Harry has arranged vaudeville bookings for some of our well-known screen folks.

If you haven't investigated carefully the possibilities of reserved seats and advanced prices for big special attractions, you are making the mistake of your life. It's just plain insanity to offer fine films at the same price you ask for mediocre stuff, and you're losing an awful lot of fine trade if you're not making it possible for them to be sure of a seat when you have a fine film.

Jake Wells of Norfolk, Va., and Harry Crandall of Washington, D. C., are launching a new national theatre owners' organization to be free of all politics and to have salaried executives. Boys, we sure need it, and Jake and Harry are two regular fellows who are capable of putting it across. I have sat in on many a session with these men and they are right. It will sure be a wonderful thing for the industry if a sure 'nuff theatre owners' organization, free from petty politics, can be started to functioning. It can be done. All the real theatre owners are crying for it. All that is really needed is for some few men to devote the necessary time to bringing the thinking theatre owners together.

Those fellows who are wondering how the picture business will be able to "absorb" the million-dollar product this year should stop to check up on the fact that "The Covered Wagon" has been at the Criterion in New York and at Grauman's in Hollywood for over six months. It might also be interesting for them to figure on the fact that Grauman's Hollywood Egyptian had its first birthday this week. When the house was announced as a two-a-day reserved seat house out here in the "small town community" of Hollywood, most of these same "heavy thinkers" said that it was a joke and couldn't possibly last. Well, they've only had two films in a year and "Covered Wagon" is still going strong. In a year's time more than a million people have paid admission. We only claim 100,000 here in Hollywood, so they surely have had to come from somewhere. Tell that to the guy who says a reserved seat house can't be made to pay. And don't forget that Hollywood has a dozen small houses that haven't been hurt a bit by the big Grauman house. As a matter of fact, they have been helped now and then by Grauman's overflow.

Down in New York they are having lots of arguments about whether producers are making films that are too costly because they are promised fictitious gross returns and also regarding distributors who steal stars from one another. They seem to overlook the one important fact. It isn't money that makes great pictures, it's brains. Most of the money can be saved beautifully once the distributors really learn who the brainy production folks are and make them partners instead of keeping them on salaries and thereby encouraging them to "shoot the wad" to be sure they get recognition. When brains start spending their own money or money they have an interest in, then you'll find real efficiency, real economy and wonderful achievement. Maybe the New York crowd will learn that lesson this year.

Very Pleasing Comedy, Splendid Hokum and Titles

The Near Lady

Universal

Length 5 Reels

DIRECTOR.....Herbert Blache

AUTHOR.....From the story by Frank R. Adams, adapted by Hugh Hoffman. Titles by Robert Hopkins.

CAMERAMAN..... William Thornley

GET 'EM IN.....Make a fuss about comedy values of this. You can promise pleasing entertainment.

PLEASE 'EM.....This is sure-fire light entertainment. The romance is slender but has good twists, and comedy business is excellent.

WHOOZINIT....Gladys Walton dominates with very pleasing support.

SPECIAL APPEAL.....Bill this specifically as entertainment. Tell 'em to come along and have a good laugh with you.

STORY VALUES.....Characters are nicely developed for comedy values, with romance twisted pleasingly.

TREATMENT.....The little touches were very nicely placed and the titles helped this wonderfully over all the rough spots.

CHARACTERIZATIONS....Miss Walton quite beautiful and thoroughly pleasing. Jerry Gendron made young hero rather human, with other players putting across comedy values unusually well.

ARTISTIC VALUES.....Sets were satisfactory, but lightings on long shots not always so good. Close-ups and medium shots were very good and general effect quite satisfactory.

This is 'way above the average run and can be figured to register anywhere as corking entertainment.

The titles helped this most decidedly. They set a mark as comedy titles because they pull laughs with great regularity without reaching too far.

The story was a slender little romance that had excellent values because they took the old-time theme of newly rich family deciding to marry into aristocratic family, with the aristocratic family trying to do the same thing because of poverty, and twisted it at just the right moments to make it carry good values from start to finish.

The playing of Miss Walton and young Mr. Gendron helped a lot, because these two actually made you believe that they were falling in love, each with the other, while they were pretending to be in love with someone else.

They pulled scores of hokum gags that got laughs, but the one outstanding kick that will really stick with everyone for a long time was a little old lady who smoked her pipe, no matter where she might be, and frequently proclaimed, "I'm just a poor lone widda." The bit where the little old lady caught on fire as a result of going to sleep with her pipe in her lap is a certain scream anywhere, and her tag line, "Oh, St. Patrick, send me a sheik," will send them out of the house with a smile on their face.

Personally, I think Gladys Walton is a real bet. This young lady screens remarkably well and I believe can be carried 'way up the ladder in a hurry if given the right opportunities.

Ever so often in this game there has been a little unostentatious comedy like this one that has slipped in and cleaned up a lot of money because it was good for a sure-fire evening of entertainment anywhere. The "Skinner's Dress Suit" series came in unheralded and "Twenty-three and a Half Hours' Leave" was started off on its bookings without the firm knowing that they had a real picture. I believe that Universal has turned out a little comedy here that can step into any house and deliver 100 per cent plus entertainment value. I would advise you to get this and sell it as an evening of joy rather than as a Gladys Walton program picture. Some of the things I have seen Miss Walton in in the past have limped badly and I believe you will do better with this if you sell it as a picture that has special comedy values, playing up the fact that beautiful Miss Walton is in it, but carefully avoiding the inference that it is just a routine Universal program picture starring this young lady.

Everywhere folks like to laugh. If a film of this sort delivers enough laughs to them they are going to like it and tell their friends about it. Just remember that they don't have the same knowledge that you have regarding the routine manufacturing process, so that if you handle your advertising carefully it will be no problem whatever to put this across as an unusual attraction worthy of special consideration.

They get this away to a very good start by opening in a Greek barber shop where Miss Walton functions as a manicure artist. The close-ups of this little lady registered in this sequence will win any gang, and when the barbers get started with their argument, which is registered on the screen with Greek words, your house will be started with a gale of laughter which will put them in the right humor to keep tagging along with this all the way. The quick swing into the "newly rich" hokum keeps up the comedy tempo and whenever it threatens to lag a bit they pull the sure-fire "lone widda" so that it pretty well hits on high right down to the finish.

Give 'em credit when they turn out a little winner like this and don't be backward about paying for it. When you make this sort of a production a real financial success you definitely point the way for the producers to concentrate on the making of better films.

Wheeler Oakman

559-440

Edward Sloman

DIRECTOR:

"THE EAGLE'S FATHER"

An Edward Sloman Production
Metro All-Star Special

This Surely Is "For No Good Reason"

In Search of a Thrill

Metro
Length 5 Reels

DIRECTOR.....Oscar Apfel

AUTHOR.....Kate Jordan's story, adapted by Basil Dickey and Winifred Dunn.

CAMERAMAN.....John Arnold

GET 'EM IN.....It has routine Dana program pulling value. Nothing more.

PLEASE 'EM.....They walk too far to get one situation with much that misses in incidental sequences, so this will hardly please.

WHOOZINIT.....Viola Dana, Warner Baxter, Templar Saxe, Mabel Van Buren, Rosemary Theby and Walter Wills.

SPECIAL APPEAL.....The only hokum exploitation angle mould be an argument about "animal pets or babies."

STORY VALUES.....They meant well but got lost in telling it.

TREATMENT....There were good production values, but story construction made it slow and uninteresting.

CHARACTERIZATIONS.....Miss Dana puts on a disguise, but several million people in this country could have picked her out by her eyes. There is no outstanding or particularly commendable bit of work in this.

ARTISTIC VALUES.....Sets and lightings were quite satisfactory, but these were wasted on dramatic action that meant nothing.

This one won't get over. It wasn't much of an idea to start with and they messed it up quite some.

They devote considerable footage to proving that Viola is a society dumb-bell very much interested in a monkey pet. Hero shows an interest in people of the underworld, so Viola decides to masquerade as an Apache to fool him. Hero takes shero through all the Paris underworld, pointing out the suffering of humanity. After they have escaped from a den of murderers, he explains that he knew her all the time and was just showing her the sights to give her some sense.

Your audience is going to gain an impression that the hero is rather a dumb-bell for not recognizing Viola immediately. If this had been played so that the audience knew that he knew who she was, there would have been at least some chance for values. As it is, the possible surprise gained by his nonchalant statement that he had known her all the time surely doesn't begin to compare with the possible drama that might have been secured if the audience had known that he knew her all the time he was taking her into danger to teach her a lesson.

After establishing Viola as a good spender in Paris at the opening of this, they cut back to a retrospect showing her inviting struggling young author hero in for a Christmas tree celebration. They give him on his entrance the very terrible title, "I forgot all about it being Christmas." There ain't no sech animal. It just can't be done.

Having thus established hero as a weird person, they show us in the next reel that Viola for no reason at all suddenly leaves a dinner party of friends in a cabaret and does a dance with an Apache entertainer. Once more I say, "It ain't done."

Viola's doing the dance caused Rosemary Theby to decide to stick a knife in her Apache lover and then, when the hero talked the cops out of pinching Rosemary, Viola decided that she would masquerade as an Apache and steal into hero's apartment "just for a lark."

Inasmuch as the hero's intentions are not clarified, the travelogue through the Paris underworld while he was showing Viola around became very tedious. The fact that the Apache dancer walked right up and recognized Viola by her "lily-white hands" made the hero seem that much more of a dumb-bell, inasmuch as the audience still were allowed to believe that he didn't know who she was.

I don't see any particular reason why you should play this. It's just one of those things. It has no particular merit. It certainly is not entertainment. At the end they tag this off with the time-honored wet baby gag, and if anything was needed to definitely stamp this as most ordinary that did it. It is true that you may get a laugh with that gag just the same as you can get applause by waving a flag; but a laugh gained by such a gag at the end of this sort of film doesn't help in the general check-up as regards this being considered worth an evening, let alone the price of admission.

They pull one set of titles between Baxter and Miss Dana for which somebody should be shot at two o'clock in the morning without even waiting for sunrise. Dana says to Baxter, in talking about a young society lady (this lady being Miss Dana), "Perhaps she too needs a friend." And Baxter replies, "I would think not—she has a monkey."

This is how they tell me I look off the set.

I can look and act like the character you give me to do.

At least scores of good directors have told me I put my characters across.

William Lowery

Westcott B. Clarke

"SAFETY LAST"
With Harold Lloyd

"THE DRAMATIC LIFE OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN"
Directed by Phil Rosen

"TEN COMMANDMENTS"
Directed by Cecil B. De Mille

"MY MAN"
Directed by Herbert Brenon

Phone 435-366 or Beacon 8444

Starts As Great Comedy—Plot Cripples It at End

The Meanest Man in the World

Principal—First National
Length 7 Reels

DIRECTOR.....Eddie Cline

AUTHOR.....From the play by George M. Cohan and Augustin McHugh, adapted by Lenore Coffee and John Goodrich.

CAMERAMEN.....Arthur Martinelli and Harold Janes.

GET 'EM IN.....Trick title and cast have some good pulling power.

PLEASE 'EM.....First half is great, but it goes to pieces in last half.

WHOOZINIT.....Bert Lytell, Blanche Sweet, Bryant Washburn, Carl Stockdale, Bill Conklin, Ward Crane, Lincoln Stedman, Victor Potel and other players in good bits.

SPECIAL APPEAL.....There is excellent opportunity for trick exploitation keyed on title.

STORY VALUES.....Preliminary structure development excellent and nicely padded with gags, but final plot mechanics very poor.

TREATMENT.....Director's comedy touches and players put over first few reels beautifully—too much plot mechanics and faulty business nctions ruined last of story.

CHARACTERIZATIONS.....Lytell and Miss Sweet did straight stuff, with Bryant Washburn, Lincoln Stedman, Carl Stockdale, Bill Conklin, Victor Potel and other good players registering character and comedy touches that made this great entertainment at times.

ARTISTIC VALUES.....Composition and lightings were not particularly distinctive, but photography and general handling were satisfactory.

They got this away to a great start in the first reel and then for half an hour it was a continuous chuckle as Eddie Cline pulled one gag after another, making it bright, snappy comedy without leaning too far towards slapstick. About half way through this they started after the one situation of the plot and from that time on it did a terrible flop.

It is unfortunate that this finishes off with such a slump, because up to the half-way mark it is a whizz. The chief thing that spoiled the last half of the film was the use of plot mechanics that could have been very easily switched to something that could have been registered successfully.

From the time Lytell and Washburn began to aid Miss Sweet in promoting an oil well to defeat the willuns, the comedy gags were dropped and the entertainment value dropped with them. They took a lot of footage to register an unwieldy idea about rescuing from an auto wreck a guy who had a truck full of umbrellas which were afterwards sold when a rain storm came along, this occasion being used to start the promotion of the oil well. It was not at all clear as to why the young promoters had to wait for a rain storm to start addressing a crowd, talking about the oil well, because it would have been much easier to have gotten a crowd ready to listen in better humor if they had picked out a nice, bright, sunny day for it. The story of the willuns' trickery would surely have been just as effective in the sunshine as in the rain.

Following the umbrella footage, they leaned very heavily on a situation which provided the willun an opportunity to foreclose a $5000 mortgage on a farm where the promoters had swung a $40,000 oil well. No explanation was given for the ridiculous state of affairs which permitted them to put a $40,000 oil well on the property without taking up the $5000 mortgage. Certainly investors in the $40,000 experimental well would have insisted upon there being an additional $5000 raised to protect them against foreclosure. As it is played, they wait until the oil, by a miracle, comes in before the well is finished in order that the hundreds of stockholders assembled should come to. Then one of them puts up the $5000 needed to thwart the willuns.

These two cumbersome and very faulty story mechanics spoiled the last part of the film because they were given too much prominence, with the comedy element omitted.

In the first few reels we had a lot of very good laughs. To be true, there was a great deal of hokum, but just the same it was funny. Eddie even got away with the gag about the lady saying that she knew Mr. Ford was in the office because she saw his car outside. If 99 per cent of your audience has had that pulled on them a good many times it will still be good for a sure-fire laugh.

It was a bit odd to see Bryant Washburn doing a second lead in this, because the title role is exactly the sort of thing which he really made famous in films. As the action ran, Bryant managed to hold up his part in a way that it ranked with the lead.

Carl Stockdale did a very good crabby old miser character, with Bill Conklin and Ward Crane good hard-boiled financial men. Lincoln Stedman got more value out of the office boy stuff than Victor Potel was able to get from the grocery store sequences because the grocery store sequences were held down by the burden of the plot action.

PERSONALLY EDITED BY WID

THE FILM AUTHORITY

Wid's

WEEKLY

PUBLISHED IN HOLLYWOOD

VOL. 1. NO. 23 SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 1923 Subscription $10.00 per year

Clarence Brown

Directing
Universal Super-
Jewel Productions

Current Release
"THE ACQUITTAL"

"A CHAIN
is no stronger than its weakest link."

This is likewise true of your health.

Your Kidneys, Heart, Liver, Lungs, etc., may be unusually strong links, but if your Stomach is not working properly, it is a link that weakens the whole chain.

Most cases of stomach trouble are caused by some of the stomach nerves having pressure on them, at the point where they branch off from the spinal cord. Let me explain more fully, how

MY SCIENTIFIC METHOD
will remove the cause of
STOMACH TROUBLE

You will be agreeably surprised to find there is no discomfort in taking these Scientific Adjustments, and gratified with the results obtained.

Bring all your Health Troubles to the only Chiropractor catering to the Motion Picture Profession.

Each patient receives my personal attention.

DR. W. I. SCHUSTER
Scientific Chiropractor and Nerve Specialist

(PALMER GRADUATE)
Licensed in California
Residence Calls Made

Office Hours:
10 to 12 and 2 to 5

Monday, Wednesday and Friday
6 to 8 P. M.

LADY IN ATTENDANCE

203 Bogardus Building
Corner Sunset and Western
Hollywood, California

Office Telephone 436-724
Residence Telephone 598-222

PRIVATE DRESSING ROOMS

A Health Service Right at Your Door. Save your strength and time. Avoid the downtown rush.

Wid's Weekly

Vol. I. No. 23 Saturday, November 3, 1923 Price 25c

Editor - - - - - - - - - Wid Gunning

Subscription $10.00 one year in United States. Foreign $15.00.
Subscribers should remit with order.

Editorial and Business Offices:
6411 Hollywood Blvd., (Hollywood) Los Angeles, Calif.
Phone Holly. 1062.

Entered as second class matter September 29th, 1923, at the Post Office at Los Angeles, California, under the act of March 3, 1879.

New York Representative: Merrit Crawford
Room 1503, 25 West 45th St. Phone Bryant 4174.
You will be interested in talking with Mr. Crawford regarding the combined circulation of Wid's Weekly and Wid's Quarterly.

Here Is Big News!

It's here.

Several times I have intimated that this winter would see the presentation of a distribution idea that would mean big things in the future of the industry. This issue carries an announcement from the Guaranty Sales Corporation, which presents a method of selling worth while attractions, which to me seems to be the absolute solution of the problems which have been confronting the independent producers.

Fundamentally, the old distribution methods have all been geared for the purpose of disposing successfully of product which might be of an inferior quality.

We have seen already very definite indications of the fact that even those companies who have sales machines geared for disposing of routine production have come to a realization of the fact that forcing ordinary film in the theatres is bad business.

Basically, in any industry, a man should be able to sell his product on merit. In this industry the independent producer has been handicapped in any effort to secure a proper return, because it was necessary for him to have his film sold by companies who had product of their own to dispose of. Always the difficulty arose that the selling organization, naturally, gave preference to their production, to the detriment of the independent producer.

The Guaranty Sales Corporation presents a method of operation which disregards all of the accepted principles of selling films in this business, which principles became established in the days of marketing programs of "fifty-two a year." "The Unit Method," presented by this new organization, takes the problem of selling films from the same viewpoint that any maker of any product might consider his selling, if no methods had been previously established. In other words, "The Unit Method" takes a good film and presents it to all of the theatres in a certain community at the same time, thereby cashing in on the interest in that community. When the film has been played for a certain period of time in one community it is moved to another district and is played simultaneously in all the theatres in that community.

Considering this from the viewpoint of commercial selling, this method is very similar to that used by many big manufacturers, who will concentrate in a certain state or group of states until thoroughly established, afterwards developing additional territory.

The old idea in the film business of releasing a film in all of the key cities in the country at the same time has been proven to be an unsatisfactory system. In recent years all of the big companies have abandoned the idea of trying to release a film all over the country at the same time. In recent years it has been demonstrated that it is not necessary to open a film in New York City.

"The Unit Method," now presented by the Guaranty Sales Corporation, applies to the film business the accepted principles of theatrical show business whereby theatrical attractions have been road showed year after year, visiting a city once each year.

I have analyzed very carefully the plan of operation presented by Guaranty Sales. I believe that it is the greatest advance step in selling that has been presented to the industry since the inception of this business.

Under the methods of the past the bulk

Reviews This Week

WHY WORRY ..... ***Lloyd-Pathe***
THE LIGHT THAT FAILED ..... ***Paramount***
THE GREEN GODDESS .. ***Inspiration Goldwyn***
THE WILD PARTY ..... ***Universal***
THE MIRACLE BABY ..... ***F. B. O.***

of the theatres have never been able to play a film until long after the public has lost interest in it. Everyone is familiar with the fact recently demonstrated with our long runs in certain cities, that the old idea of showing a film for one week only in a city was faulty, because most of the fans were unable to find the film after the first run was finished. Under the unit method a good film would be shown simultaneously in one hundred theatres each night, so that in a period of a few weeks, while everyone was still thinking and talking about the production, the offering could be played in all of the community theatres, or in other words, brought to the door of the fan.

Certainly this method of operation has a very decided value in making it possible to bring a film back to a community once a year. It will show for a month or six weeks and arouse a great deal of interest. It will then be removed for one year, so that when it returns the following year there will be the same value that is now secured to the annual visit of successful theatrical attractions.

It has been demonstrated that a film will succeed or fail in any given district or community according to the manner in which it is presented in that community. A successful run in Chicago, under the present system, does not necessarily mean a successful run in Denver or Seattle. The Unit Method gives intensive selling in each district and actually covers the country in the same period of time that is now used, with the possibility of doing a much greater volume of business, because every booking is made when the interest in the film, through word of mouth discussion, makes its value greater.

There is another very decided value to the method of operation presented by the Guaranty Sales Corporation. Under their plan of operation a group of salesmen start with one production and go through the entire country selling and exploiting only that one film. Not only does the producer get the value of concentrated effort, but he is placed in a position where he knows that there is no possible opportunity to use his film to help the sale of any other film.

The independent producer will also be decidedly interested in the arrangement of the Guaranty Sales Corporation which provides that every rental check from the theatre owner will be made out to the Los Angeles Bank of the producer, which bank will be authorized to pay over direct to the producer the percentage of the rental which is his share of the profits. Such a direct payment system is better than any arrangement I have ever heard of in the selling of films.

I believe that "The Unit Method" will be welcomed most heartily by theatre owners, because it will give to every theatre owner the opportunity to play a good film when it is still very much alive, and while the exploitation expenditures in his community are still delivering box office value.

Under the present methods of selling, one hundred prints of a subject are scattered over the country. For instance, to make the point, we will say that each of twenty offices gets five prints. Actually one may get three and another eight, but that does not enter into the point which I want to make. In order to play all of the theatres in any community with the five or six prints available, the exchange must take approximately nine months to get the bulk of the business in. As a matter of actuality, it frequently takes two years, or more, to play any given district with half a dozen prints. Under the unit method there will be two units working on each film, with the country divided into twelve districts. That makes six districts for each unit to cover, and with six weeks bookings in each district, the entire country will be covered in nine months' time.

I have checked, with exceptional care, this plan of selling. I believe it is the greatest and most valuable innovation that has ever been presented, and I will be very much interested in having anyone show me where it is in any way weak. I believe the officers of the Guaranty Sales Corporation will also be interested in having anyone try to present any basic weakness in their plan.

For years capable creators and independent financial men have wanted to produce independently. I know of scores of very capable creators and men with millions who have been waiting for the presentation of a selling plan which would give intelligent, intensive selling of a worth while film, in a manner that would bring proper returns honestly delivered. It's here.

Certainly this method of operation has come into the industry at a most timely period. Even the biggest corporations have admitted that the forcing of bad product is bad business. With this new method of operation open to the independent producer, the opportunity

is now afforded for anyone who is able to make a really worth while subject, to get that subject into the theatres of the country in an efficient manner and get an honest return on it. Personally I believe that the unit method will bring many times the returns that the methods of the past might bring, because under this plan an exceptional film can cash in on that most wonderful of all advertising mediums, word of mouth advertising, and instead of having one good year, and nothing to speak of in the years to follow, the good film will be able to return to each community year after year, and bring a splendid rental.

As a sample of what I mean, I think that "The Miracle Man" would have brought in a minimum of $10,000,000 in rentals, if it had been sold in this manner, so that it could have returned once a year to every community every year since it has been made.

Naturally the officers of the Guaranty Sales Corporation will choose very carefully the product which they will offer. They realize that they must have exceptional films. No intelligent person, in these days, should expect to make a fortune from poor films, or even from just good films. In my opinion the unit method will be generally adopted in this industry in the years to come as the proper way of selling all good films. It has all of the advantages and none of the disadvantages of road showing, and in checking this method over very carefully I have found countless little points which clearly meet every problem that has come up in the past few years, causing trouble between independent producers, distributors, and theatre owners.

Surely the announcement of the Guaranty Sales Corporation is an event. It has a wonderful significance to Hollywood because it means that here is a positive method of developing fully and completely the independent producer, thereby giving an outlet for the services of everyone capable of actually making worthwhile productions. It is a wonderful thing for independent capital because it gives the financial man a chance to go into partnership with the capable creator, knowing that there is an assured market for worthwhile productions.

Alec
B. Francis

"THREE WISE FOOLS"
King Vidor Production
For Goldwyn

"THE GOLD DIGGERS"
For Warner Brothers
Harry Beaumont Production

"BEAU BRUMMEL"
Harry Beaumont Production
For Warner Brothers

A Whiz of a Comedy--Absolutely Sure Fire

Why Worry

Hal Roach—Pathe

Length 7 Reels

DIRECTORS.....Fred Newmeyer and Sam Taylor

AUTHOR.....Sam Taylor, Teddy Wilde and Tim Wehlin.

CAMERAMAN.....Walter Lundin

GET 'EM IN.....After Harold's recent knockouts this should pull exceptionally big business.

PLEASE 'EM.....I consider this absolutely sure fire for any audience anywhere.

WHOOZINIT.....Harold, a good new girl, a young giant, and good supporting cast.

SPECIAL APPEAL.....The title gives you some trick exploitation possibilities, and you can also talk about the eight-foot-six giant in this.

STORY VALUES.....They have burlesqued South American revolution story similar to Fairbanks' "Americano."

TREATMENT....The timing of gags was wonderfully well done, and the gags and titles were exceptionally good.

CHARACTERIZATIONS.....They made the stuff just twice as funny by the serious manner in which they played it.

ARTISTIC VALUES.....Photography generally was very good, and they really created good tropical town atmosphere.

Boys, here's another whiz.

Harold Lloyd has stepped right out in the past year or so, until today he certainly stands at the head of the class for consistent comedy performances.

Of course, this sort of feature comedy stuff calls for organization, because it is fundamentally gags, timing and titles. They started this with a great idea, and then crowded it full of wonderful hokum, taking each gag and developing it by repetition and timing so that it earned its full quota of laughs.

Basically, they use the old South American revolution story, similar to the one which Fairbanks made as the "Americano," and burlesque it, with a bit of "Grandma's Boy" added, through having Harold, a young millionaire, believing himself to be an invalid until he found that he could whip half the army.

We are introduced to a new leading lady, Jobyna Ralston, and she gets away to a flying start in this, because she has many close-ups in which she registers most attractively.

A young Norwegian, who stands eight feet six and weighs 500 pounds, works through the most of this with Lloyd, and they certainly get a ton of laughs out of this young man. This young fellow is big enough that it seems quite real to have him stick his shoulders through the adobe walls of the houses, and at different intervals he manages to whip about 500 or maybe 1000 men. They also get an awful lot of fun out of having the giant throw some cannons about, and when they finally strap a cannon on his back it is a comedy high-spot that will bring down any house.

They registered a lot of mighty good gags, with these helped by titles, before they brought the giant into it, but the use of the giant provided enough unusual sequences that they kept this thing building right up to the final tag. The construction was excellent for comedy purposes, because they would let it down just enough here and there to give the laughs better value when they swung into the action again.

You may find some of your fans disagreeing as to whether this is better than "Grandma's Boy" or "Safety Last," but I can guarantee to you that there will be a goodly percentage inclined to believe that this is as good, or better, than the recent Lloyd successes. Certainly there is nothing more you could ask.

The title of this gives you some good exploitation opportunities, and personally I believe that this will roll about as much money in at the box office, and turn out about as high a percentage of pleased patrons, as anything that has come along in many months.

Here in Los Angeles they put out some twenty-four sheets saying: "Harold Lloyd says real estate will double in value, so why worry?" You probably cannot use that same slogan in your community, but you can easily figure out some very timely argument that will attract everyone's attention, and then present Harold Lloyd as passing some opinion on it, tagging the thing off with "Why Worry?"

I imagine that of all the people working in pictures today Harold Lloyd is about as well liked as any one individual. Harold has a clean-cut, pleasing personality that wins him friends constantly, and his stuff has never been quite as rough as that of some of the other comics.

Of course, the feature comedy proposition is really an organization matter. It could not be said that this would have the same value with someone else doing Lloyd's stuff, because Harold makes many points by his expressions and his serious playing of the burlesque stuff, yet the working out of gags is a task of tremendous importance, and really I believe that most of our dramatic continuity writers could learn a lot about construction by close association with our comedy gag men, or at least some study of their methods.

When it comes to tempo and cutting, a comedy like this registers values that make some of our so-called dramatic successes look sick. It is generally recognized in show business that getting a laugh by pantomime is some achievement, and when you realize that comedy organizations like Lloyd's have to build a new series of gags for each feature, or at least turn many of the old ones into new form, then you can understand something of their task.

E. Alyn (Fred) Warren

"As Is"

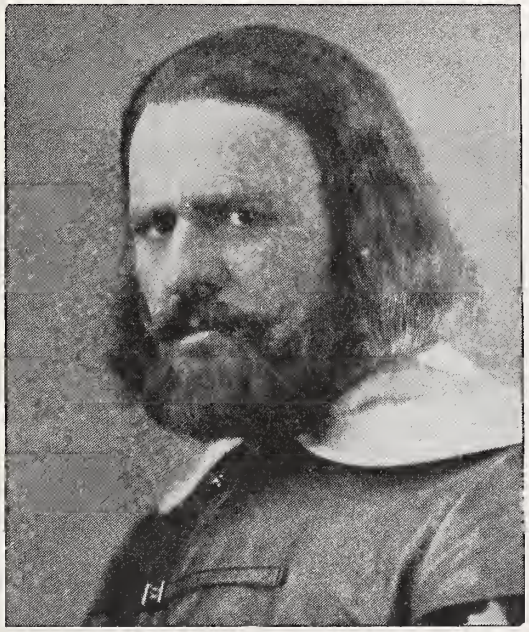
Not the "type" he makes 'em

E. Alyn (Fred) Warren

as The Lieutenant of Police

in

"THE HANDS OF MARA"



E. Alyn (Fred) Warren

as

Captain Myles Standish

in

"THE COURTSHIP OF MYLES STANDISH"

E. Alyn (Fred) Warren

as Father Abraham

in

"HUNGRY HEARTS"

Interesting-Good Characterizations But Misses as Drama

The Light That Failed

Paramount

Length 7 Reels

DIRECTOR .....George Melford

AUTHOR.....Rudyard Kipling's story, adapted by F. McGrew Willis and Jack Cunningham.

CAMERAMAN .....Charles Clark

GET 'EM IN.....Feature Percy Marmont of "If Winter Comes," and talk about characterizations given by Marmont and Miss Logan.

PLEASE 'EM.....This has excellent atmosphere which holds the interest, and two very good characters, but it wanders and stumbles very badly as drama.

WHOOZINIT.....Percy Marmont, Jacqueline Logan, David Torrence and Sigrid Holmquist.

SPECIAL APPEAL.....It is from Kipling's classic, but I would concentrate attention on the English atmosphere, and performances of Marmont and Miss Logan.

STORY VALUES.....There isn't much plot, it's fairly well known, and those who don't know it will anticipate climaxes all the way.

TREATMENT.....It is interesting, but construction lets it sag badly, and emotional highspots really don't hit, despite some clever characterization work.

CHARACTERIZATIONS .....Marmont's personality lifts it, and Miss Logan is permitted to dominate. Torrence is good. Miss Holmquist thoroughly blah.

ARTISTIC VALUES.....Atmosphere throughout was excellent. This alone makes it good entertainment. Photographically this was very well handled.

I believe most fans will consider this reasonably worth while for two basic reasons. One is Percy Marmont's personality. The other is seeing Jacqueline Logan do a characterization that gets across.

Those who are not familiar with this story will be pretty well ahead of it most of the time, because the mechanics are very simple, decidedly obvious and easily anticipated. It is one of those plots where the sympathy goes out in chunks to a little street walker, while the sweet shero sits around on the sidelines and waits for the clutch. The casting of Sigrid Holmquist as "Maizie" in this made it that much more certain that Miss Logan, as the Coster waif, would get all the sympathy. Miss Holmquist was hard, cold, and very blah from start to finish. You know that it isn't right for our blind hero to fall in love with the little girl from the streets, but the fact that he doesn't gives this an ending that is really almost tragic insofar as the reactions of most audiences will register.

Several times in the course of this story it dies pretty dead. The tempo of the action is not so good, and the continuity carries us along through great chunks of stuff that is really not dramatic, and certainly does not advance the story effectively to the emotional highspots.

Somehow the emotional climaxes, with very few exceptions, miss. I believe that this is principally due to the action building up to them. The biggest kick in all the footage comes in the bit where Miss Logan pleads with Torrence to let her live with him, and Marmont discovers them embracing. This was very well handled.

Technically, they get over the gradual coming of Marmont's blindness very effectively, but the coming of the blindness, and the final destroying of the painting, were not as dramatic as they should have been, principally because of tempo and action development.

I am mighty glad to give Miss Logan credit for the very good work she has registered in this. Her characterization really does a lot toward carrying this along and holding your attention. Miss Logan, Marmont and Torrence carry the burden, and where the fans have patience and are willing to accept rather a quiet story development, this may be regarded as a very satisfactory visualization of the classic.

There is rather an awkward spot in the story where they bring Marmont and Miss Holmquist together by means of having Percy find a dog which "jest happens" to lead him right over to his childhood sweetheart. The offering is decidedly slow in getting under way. The thing really doesn't take hold until Miss Logan comes on.

One of our old-time friends from the earliest days, Robert Brower, makes a bit stand out very effectively. Mr. Brower is probably the oldest active film actor, in point of service, as well as years.

In billing this I would recommend particularly that you play up Percy Marmont as prominently as you do Miss Logan. Marmont has made such a success in the Fox production "If Winter Comes" that I believe his name will have a decided value in helping to pull some real business. David Torrence, brother of Ernest, has done some mighty good work in several big features, and will probably be remembered by many, so that you should also step a little heavy on mentioning him in your billing. Miss Logan is properly the star in this, because despite the fact that Marmont, as the painter, is the central figure, Miss Logan's characterization sticks right out of the offering, so as to dominate a good part of the action.

Don't figure this as a big winner. It will just about get by satisfactorily. The fans will never race around to the back fence to tell their neighbors to be sure and go see this one, so you can figure it as a very well staged offering that will probably satisfy and get through without any serious kick back.

GUARANTY SALES CORPORATION

THE UNIT METHOD

It sounds too good to be true—
but it is true!

Theatre Owners and Producers are in this announcement introduced to the one safe and sane sales method for all merit productions of the future, The Unit Method!

By its sound, basic structure The Unit Method automatically eliminates the problems that have for years kept the Theatre Owner and the Producer in constant turmoil.

It puts good productions in theatres while the public is interested in them.

It pays the returns direct to the Producer, without having those returns in any way confused or involved with the returns of other productions.

The Unit Method is based on common sense selling and show-business principles.

Each production is handled separately by sales and exploitation men especially adapted for that production.

We have divided the country geographically into Twelve Districts. Two sales units start working in different parts of the country.

Each unit carries enough prints of a production to book simultaneously every theatre in a district within a period of six weeks, after which period all prints are moved to the next district and there worked in the same manner.

Each unit has six districts to book, giving six weeks to each district, thus covering the entire country in nine months time!

The Unit Method makes the annual visit of a big production the same sort of an event that the annual visit of a big New York theatrical success has been!

And, both Theatre Owner and Producer cash in each year on our concentrated advertising and sales campaign exploiting each production separately!

SECURITY BANK BUILDING
HOLLYWOOD CALIFORNIA

GUARANTY SALES CORPORATION

THE UNIT METHOD

To the Theatre Owner

Each production is sold separately on its merits.

There will be no selling of Series or Program Bookings.

We are not selling Franchises!

We are not asking you to finance our Producers!

We are not asking deposits on productions you have not seen!

Your theater, big or small, is a First-Run for every one of our productions by virtue of The Unit Method of simultaneous territorial booking.

Our special advertising campaign in your district is timed with your play date, and you get the direct benefit!

Our exploitation men are actively working in your community, putting over each production while you are playing it.

You get big productions while they are hot—while they are alive—while the newspapers are telling about them —while the fans throughout your State are talking about them!

You pay only for what you want, and we help you sell your patrons!

SECURITY BANK BUILDING
HOLLYWOOD CALIFORNIA

GUARANTY SALES CORPORATION

THE UNIT METHOD

To the Producer

Your production is sold individually—it is never sold with any other production!

A complete staff of sales and exploitation experts tour the country, working exclusively for your single production until the last booking is played!

We cannot possibly under The Unit Method use your production to sell or boost any other picture!

Your production gets every dollar it is worth—with no awful slump after the big houses are played!

We are not interested in the cost of a production, but only in its merits, because we know that money alone does not make good pictures!

The Theater Owner makes all checks payable to your bank—making your bank your bookkeeper!

Through our intensive sales campaign under The Unit Method you get more money, and you get it fast!

SECURITY BANK BUILDING
HOLLYWOOD CALIFORNIA

GUARANTY SALES CORPORATION

THE UNIT METHOD

Our Product

The productions to which, under The Unit Method, we will give our concentrated exploitation and sales efforts will be of the quality that will hold for us an undisputed leadership which we intend to maintain in this industry!

We know that The Unit Method will be the method of selling all the real merit productions of the future!

As the years go by we will, of course, have rivals and imitators attempting to use our Unit Method; we cannot forestall imitation.

But we are leaders today, presenting a wonderful advance in the industry!

And we shall continue to be leaders!

And we know that to remain leaders we must choose product carefully!

We have, therefore, an advisory board of specialists on production values!

The greatest creative workers have anxiously awaited a market that will give them intensive, intelligent selling, with the returns to them depending entirely upon the merits of their work.

You will be thoroughly pleased when we announce our first production!

Sincerely yours,

John W McKay

General Manager.

SECURITY BANK BUILDING
HOLLYWOOD CALIFORNIA

Comedy and Suspense Values Make This Entertain

The Green Goddess

Inspiration-Goldwyn Cosmopolitan

Length—10 Reels

DIRECTOR.....Sidney Olcott

AUTHOR.....William Archer's play, adapted by Forrest Halsey.

CAMERAMAN.....Harry Fishbeck

GET 'EM IN.....Go heavy on this as comedy melodrama, promising real entertainment.

PLEASE 'EM.....There is excellent element of suspense here, with good subtle comedy values.

WHOOZINIT.....George Arliss, Alice Joyce, Dave Powell, Harry Morey, Ivan Simpson, and Jetta Goulda.

SPECIAL APPEAL.....Play up fact this was very successful play, in which Arliss starred, and go after those who appreciate subtle comedy.

STORY VALUES.....This was great character study of polished willun with a sense of humor.

TREATMENT.....They should have started this as in the play, otherwise play's values have been nicely retained.

CHARACTERIZATIONS.....Arliss delightful, Simpson as valet great, others very satisfactory.

ARTISTIC VALUES.....Mysterious Oriental atmosphere nicely established. Photography generally very pleasing.

I think this is great entertainment.

In the play Arliss made a tremendous success, principally because of the comedy values that topped off the tense melodrama.

The plot mechanics of this are worthy of a serial. The comedy dialogue is delightful. The central character is quaint, to say the least.

There is nothing more sure fire for entertainment purposes than a comedy villain. In this story Arliss is presented as a highly educated ruler of an isolated kingdom in the Himalaya mountains. Arliss is the sort of man who tells you that he intends to have you killed in the morning, but insists upon your dressing for dinner and enjoying yourself while you are still alive.

The play has to do with two men and a woman landing from an aeroplane in this isolated country, where they are made prisoners by Arliss, whose brothers are about to be executed by the British Government, for political reasons. Arliss, a graduate of Oxford, is most polite and a marvelous host, but explains coldly that he intends to kill the two men, and also the woman, if she refuses to beeome his mistress.

There is a great comedy character, an English valet, who makes a fine foil for Arliss, and the melodrama has to do with the efforts of the players to get a wireless outfit and send a rescue message. They have to deliberately heave the valet out of a window, for a nice little fall of about half a mile, over a precipice, in order to get to the wireless, and Arliss shoots and kills Harry Morey when he finds him sending the message. Just as his priests and the natives are torturing Dave Powell and Miss Joyce, aeroplanes begin bombing the town, and they are released.

This may sound very wild. In a way it is. You will never know what good entertainment it is, however, until you see it. The titles from the play are delightful. In a sense, they are poking fun at the more or less wild melodrama, even though it is played seriously all the way through. As a sample of this, Arliss, when he is about to torture Mr. Powell and Miss Joyce, turns to Miss Joyce and says, "When next you see me I will be a priest instead of a king." He waits for that title to sink in, and then turns to look at her and says, "Ridiculous, isn't it?" Arliss, in a way, in his character, keeps you from laughing at the melodrama because he is laughing at it with you.

There is a wonderful tag line, which they kept in from the show. After all the uproar about Arliss trying to keep Miss Joyce for his queen, we find her rescued at the last minute, and as the lovers depart Arliss stands and thinks a moment, and then says, "Well, she'd probably have been a damned nuisance anyway."

Although the very first shot, showing a foot pulling an overhead fan, is a great bit to establish the India atmosphere, I believe that they have made a radical mistake in failing to open this with the wrecking of the aeroplane, just as the play was opened. There are some very effective shots of the snow-clad mountains, with the aeroplane over them, and by all means I believe that they should still cut this film to open with these shots, and then go right into the first scene, where the natives discover the English trio. The suspense and the surprise of finding Arliss an educated man would be tremendously better with this treatment, and it would start the picture with the same bang that made the play opening effective. Nothing is gained by the opening as screened, and as a matter of fact, much is lost, because some good suspense values are tipped off entirely too soon. It would be very easy to edit this film at the first to make it conform with the play, and I certainly think that that should be done.

Naturally this entire production is centered around Arliss. Ivan Simpson, as the valet, who did the part in the play, is the next important character. Miss Joyce, Morey and Powell hold down their parts very satisfactorily, and Jetta Goulda is just elusive enough with her rather attractive face, to make the bit which she did stand out.

When I saw this first, as a play, I considered it great screen material. I am very glad that Arliss did the part on the screen, and I think they have given us a bit of entertainment that will make many new friends for the screen.

Lookin' Out the Window in Hollywood

The announcement of the Lasky shut-down caused a lot of talk. Although the explanations given for the shut-down admit a reorganization, they do not go into details. In this connection it is interesting to note that both C. B. and William DeMille have gone East. It is also of interest that Famous Lasky stock has been traded in on the stock exchange in New York to the extent of about ten million dollars in the few days following the announcement of the shut-down. The first day the announcement went out there was almost five million in stock traded in and the stock fell twelve points. If someone sold this stock short at the right time they probably cleaned up a million or two during the day. It's a great life. Why make pictures when there is the stock market to play with from the inside looking out.

———o———

Doug and Mary will do the industry a very wonderful service if they will go through with their announced intention of bringing suit against a "dirt sheet" that has printed a story slurring them.

———o———

They are certainly making "Flaming Youth" sound "naughty naughty" in the trade paper copy that is going out. It is rather hard to reconcile the billing of Colleen Moore as the shero of a "naughty naughty" film of the sensational sort.

———o———

I'm very much interested in what Pat Powers is going to do next. Art Schmidt is out here; you know Art has been with "P. A." since the Stone Age, and Art says he thinks he'll go in the real estate business. Maybe "P. A." thinks he is gonna quit foolin' with fillums, but I'm bettin' he's back in the game with both feet before Spring comes along.

———o———

The New York trade papers are all admitting that a new distribution method is needed. They all point out what's wrong with the present methods and ask for a way out. I'm rather proud of the fact that the first announcement of "the way out" comes from Hollywood and is presented to the trade first in this week's issue of Wid's. "The Unit Method" is what the Eastern trade papers have been searching for. It points a new deal in the film industry with the independent, for the first time, getting a genuine "run for his money."

———o———

Somehow I have forgotten in the rush of things to tell you folks out here in Hollywood that Harvey Gausman and Jean Temple, formerly in charge of the Film Daily offices here, are now in charge of my business offices. No, they didn't remind me to tell you. They're not that sort. They're both regular, all the way. We've been moving and moving up here in our office over Levy's trying to get enough office space. Finally this week we are settled with a nice suite of eight offices so that if you drop in on us at any time now you will find that we have plenty of room to make you comfortable.

Eleanor L. Fried

Care Wid's, Holly. 1062

Formerly editor in chief of

New York Office Film Editing Department
Universal Film Mfg. Co.

Afterwards associated with

Eric Von Stroheim Production Unit at
Universal City

Thoroughly experienced in production management and film editing. I would prefer an association that would keep me active in that field.

Howard Truesdell

Vic Compte De Brienge
in
"ASHES OF VENGEANCE"
Directed by Frank Lloyd

Judge Norton
in
Rupert Hughes'
"LAW AGAINST LAW"

"Old Man Leffert"
in
Perley Poore Sheehan's
Initial Production of
"INNOCENT"
For Universal

Under Contract for Two Pictures
Colin Chase Productions
578-431

Emily Barrye

436-927

or

Holly. 1062

Nothing Big, But Satisfying, Light Entertainment

The Wild Party

Universal

Length 5 Reels

DIRECTOR.....Herbert Blache

AUTHOR....Marion Orth, adapted by Hugh Hoffman

CAMERAMAN.....Clyde DeVinna

GET 'EM IN.....Title has rather good pulling power, but don't go after this too strong.

PLEASE 'EM.....You can figure this reasonable, light entertainment — not exceptional, but it should satisfy.

WHOOZINIT.....Gladys Walton, Bob Ellis, Lewis Sargent, Dora Revier, Sidney Bracey, Bob Daley and good cast.

SPECIAL APPEAL.....Comedy bootlegger figures throughout and this angle may be valuable in your exploitation.

STORY VALUES.....The plot has so much action, and is so involved, that they lose some values in getting it all straightened out.

TREATMENT.....There are some good moments, from an entertainment viewpoint, and generally production values are quite satisfactory.

CHARACTERIZATIONS.....Everyone has routine stuff except Sid Bracey, who gets many laughs as comedy bootlegger.

ARTISTIC VALUES.....Generally this is quite satisfactory. The composition is not remarkable, but photographically it is pleasing.

In a way this suffers from having too much story. The plot is an involved farce structure that builds into a rather complicated gathering of many people at a mountain cabin, which requires much action to register the neeessary story points, this surplus action interfering at times with the entertainment values.

Miss Walton is decidedly pleasing, Lewis Sargent gets a eertain number of laughs, and Sid Braeey, as a comedy bootlegger, registers at least twenty good giggles, so that, taken all in all, this will please very generally, if they don't expect too mueh.

It is rather important with this that you offer it as a pleasing little farce that will provide an amusing evening. If you get your fans in with that thought in mind they will probably be thoroughly satisfied.

They open this up registering Miss Walton as a young lady ambitious to establish herself as a reporter on a daily paper. Lewis Sargent is a eomedy character, working in the newspaper office, and they get some laughs out of his interest in Miss Walton, and his going along with her to report a society fuetion.

Bob Ellis, as the hero, becomes involved in some scandal, due to some friends of his using his eabin for a wild party, and Miss Walton is given the task of writing a story about Mr. Ellis and his escapades. Ellis is an author whom Miss Walton has come to know under the name which he uses as a novelist. She does not realize that the society man whose scandals she has been delegated to write about, is the same young author that she has enjoyed playing with in the swimming pool. Dora Revier does a snappy vamp, and she helps to eomplicate Mr. Ellis's troubles by getting into the wrong room frequently, and by getting him involved innocently in her battle with her husband.

The first part of the story is helped by a swimming pool sequence, in which Miss Walton and some other young ladies disport themselves in one-piece suits. Lobby photos registering Gladys in her one-piece suit, posed for a dive, should guarantee you quite some additional cash customers.

It takes quite a lot of plot mechanies to eventually bring most of the actors to the hero's cabin, each group being ignorant of the other's presence, until they all get pretty badly mixed up. In a way the farce eonstruction towards the end of this sort of suggests "Seven Keys to Bald Pate."

All through the last half of the film Sid Bracey wanders around, doing a comedy bootlegger, who finds it neeessary to hide himself in a eoueh in the cabin, and they work up the gag of Sid trying to get out of his hiding place, only to be interrupted, with enough repetition that it becomes very funny.

Figured as light entertainment, I believe that this is pretty good stuff. The story could be argued about if you were trying to fuss with this and taking it too seriously, but, after all, this is offered as a routine offering, and not as a special, and you will undoubtedly find that it will give more satisfaction, generally, than many of the so-called features that are inclined to take themselves too seriously.

There are a good many titles in this that earn laughs. There are some of the titles that are not so good.

I don't remember catching Miss Revier in anything before this, but this young lady loomed up quite effeetively in a few shots, giving promise of pretty definite possibilities as a vamp.

Miss Walton is given a chanee to do some of the old overall hokum, in addition to the bathing suit sequence, but in this her eharacterization was deeidedly more indefinite than it was in the more recent release "The Near Lady." Gladys is sure easy to look at, however, and I believe your fans will take this as it eomes, and be thoroughly satisfied, if you have not heralded it as a tremendous knoekout.

In a way they got a little bit of everything into this, because they had melodrama, storm effects, bathing girls, French faree situations of young ladies and young men getting into the wrong rooms, and many other of the well known hoknm ingredients, even including an automobile ehase. They sort of made this up with everything but the kitchen stove.

Robert M. Marks

Juvenile and Character Heavies
1714 McCadden Place
Tel. 570-671

Arthur Rankin

"THE CALL OF THE CANYON"
Directed by
Victor Fleming for Lasky

"BEYOND THE VEIL"
Directed by
Frederick Bond

"RAGS" DEMPSTER
in
FIGHTING BLOOD SERIES

In Production
"DISCONTENTED HUSBANDS"
Directed by
Edward Le Saint

Preparing
"THE BEAUTY HUNGER"
With Theda Bara
Directed by
Tod Browning

Just One of Those Things--Quite Ordinary

The Miracle Baby

F. B. O.

Length 6 Reels

DIRECTOR.....Val Paul

AUTHOR.....Frank Pierce's story, adapted by Vernstein and Jaccard.

CAMERAMAN.....Robert DeGrasse

GET 'EM IN.....This has value according to Harry Carey's pulling power.

PLEASE 'EM.....If they still stand for routine action hokum, this can get them. It moves, and that's about all.

WHOOZINIT.....Harry Carey, and a lot of players doing routine stuff.

SPECIAL APPEAL.....You don't dare promise anything on this one.

STORY VALUES.....This plot moved along like something that had been written some evening after dinner.

TREATMENT.....They couldn't have worried much about this, because it was just "one of those things."

CHARACTERIZATIONS.....It was plain movie from start to finish, and everyone acted accordingly.

ARTISTIC VALUES.....There was some snow stuff, and a few good shots of the "great barren spaces," but as a whole the photography was ordinary.

I have a hunch that this sort of thing is passing out. They can still be made for the "shooting galleries," if they are made cheap enough, and get by, but theatres that are playing good pictures can't afford to run this sort of movie at the same admission price, if they hope to live.

There is nothing distinctive about this. There was no single sequence or stunt that pulled it out of the rut. I don't know why they called it "The Miracle Baby," unless maybe it was because the baby was about two months old when they found it, and apparently had managed to live, without any assistance, through a storm which had killed the father, and during which the mother had died.

There was a certain amount of action in this, but it was very crude melodrama, and did not build to any climaxes.

Early in the story Harry Carey is choking a crook, when the heavy stabs the crook in the back, through a curtain. Harry thinks he has killed the man and beats it into the storm. A posse pursues Harry, but decides that he cannot live through the storm. They go back home.

Of course, we know Harry can't die, being the hero, and so we are not surprised when he finds an obliging old miner who takes him right in and welcomes him as a partner. This old guy promptly begins to talk about his long-lost son, and we begin to suspect that Harry is going to be the son. They fooled us, however, as it was the guy Harry killed who was the son. That's just as bad, because by the time you get that far you don't care.

About the funniest thing that happens is a title they pull when Harry staggers into the town from which he had fled as a hunted murderer, and is greeted by a former friend, with the title, "Well, I see you're back." If they were playing this as a burlesque comedy, that title could not have been better placed.

In addition to lacking stunts that might justify it, in the same way that exciting serials justify themselves to a certain clientele, this was not well produced from many viewpoints. While the blizzard was supposed to be raging, in the storm stuff, it was decidedly noticeable that the wind was blowing very hard in the immediate foreground, and not blowing at all in the background. With fans as conversant as they are today with the use of wind machines, such an error slaps them right in the face. Don't think they don't get it. Practically everyone in any house will pick up that point.

There was one spot in this that might have had some possibilities, but they missed them. This was where Harry and the old man, who had accepted him as a partner, started taking care of the baby. The right sort of treatment might have made a very good sequence out of this rather old situation, but they started it off right at the jump with the wet baby gag, and nothing which they did afterwards redeemed it. They earn one laugh. That is the announcement, after carefully weighing the baby in a home-made scales, that he weighs several cans of beans and a couple of tins of salmon.

Of course, when they got around to it, we had the necessary confession to prove that hero had not killed willun, and then there was a clutch, with everyone apparently satisfied. I looked at this in a downtown L. A. theatre, where a mere handful of folks sat in, between eight and nine o'clock. It didn't get over with them, and I can't see how this sort of thing can stand up in any good house. It may not have cost much, but I believe it has cost too much to show any reasonable profit in the sort of theatres that it can play in and give satisfaction.

It is this sort of production which has caused me to emphasize the need of a different admission price for very good films and very ordinary films. The old "opery house" manager used to play a $2.00 attraction and a couple of 75c melodramas one week, and a 10, 20, 30 "rep" show the next week, because in his community he had clienteles for each class of production. I do not want to undertake to say at any time that there are not many folks who may think that this crude action movie is good entertainment. I do want to emphasize, and in fact yell most emphatically the very evident truth that this sort of film should certainly be played at a price decidedly different from what you might ask for Robin Hood, The Covered Wagon, Strangers of the Night, or Why Worry?

The Eyes of Hollywood

Directed

by

Ward Wing

With an All-Star Cast, Including

Ward Wing

Herbert Rawlinson

Ernest Torrence

Hoot Gibson

Roy Stewart

Thomas H. Ince

Raymond Hatton

Reginald Denny

Wallace Beery

Forrest Stanley

Neely Edwards

Mahlon Hamilton

Bill Desmond

Clyde Filmore

Lillian Marshall

Priscilla Dean

Kathlyn Williams

Estelle Taylor

Gladys Walton

Gertrude Olmsted

Laura LaPlante

Lucille Rickson

Louise Lorraine

Grace Darmond

Anna May Wong

Patsy Ruth Miller

Virginia Lee Corbin

Priscilla Bonner

Lewis Sargent

Norman Kerry

William V. Mong

Bert Roach

Mr. Executive!

Have you ever investigated "Cameras?"

We do not want to presume to tell you how to run your business.

We simply want to make a friendly suggestion.

You carefully check up on the salaries paid your stars and your directors.

You are interested in the number of weeks used in photographing your feature films.

We are sure you will be interested in investigating the time saving and quality giving values of Mitchell Cameras, if you are not already using them with every production unit you now employ.

We thank you.

Mitchell Camera Corporation

6025 Santa Monica Blvd. Los Angeles, Cal.

PERSONALLY EDITED BY WID

THE FILM AUTHORITY

Wid's

WEEKLY

PUBLISHED IN HOLLYWOOD

VOL. 1. NO. 24 SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 1923 Subscription $10.00 per year

Priscilla Moran

A Sparkling Bit of Loveliness That the World Is Going to Love

Now Producing Her First Starring Picture at the Hollywood Studios Under Direction of Millard Webb

SURPRISING THINGS

Emerson said that between men the most surprising thing was common sense.

The Chiropractic Health Service

from this office is distinctly different from that of any other office, because it is the lengthened shadow of the personality directing it, and that personality is different. It is different by birth, by training, by education, by reason of its determination to serve the profession better and better as time adds knowledge and skill, and it is different by reason of the kind of people and cases it has handled.

DR. W. I. SCHUSTER

Scientific Chiropractor and Nerve Specialist

(PALMER GRADUATE)
Licensed in California
Residence Calls Made

Office Hours:
10 to 12 and 2 to 5

Monday, Wednesday and Friday
6 to 8 P. M.

203 Bogardus Building
Corner Sunset and Western
Hollywood, California

Office Telephone 436-724
Residence Telephone 598-222

LADY IN ATTENDANCE

PRIVATE DRESSING ROOMS

A Health Service Right at Your Door. Save your strength and time. Avoid the downtown rush.

Wid's
Weekly

Vol. I. No. 24 Saturday, November 10, 1923 Price 25c

Editor - - - - - - - - - Wid Gunning

Subscription $10.00 one year in United States. Foreign $15.00. Subscribers should remit with order.

Editorial and Business Offices:
6411 Hollywood Blvd., (Hollywood) Los Angeles, Calif.
Phone Holly. 1062.

Entered as second class matter September 29th, 1923, at the Post Office at Los Angeles, California, under the act of March 3, 1879.

New York Representative: Merrit Crawford
Room 1503, 25 West 45th St. Phone Bryant 4174.
You will be interested in talking with Mr. Crawford regarding the combined circulation of Wid's Weekly and Wid's Quarterly.

Have You Checked It?

It sure caused conversation.

Have you had your argument about "The Unit Method" of distribution?

Certainly no announcement made in this industry has created quite as much stir as the announcement of the method of distribution of independent films presented last week by the Guaranty Sales Corporation.

For several years now independent producers have been running around in circles trying to figure a way out. Many of these independent factors have been equipped to deliver decidedly high grade quality product. There has always been the stumbling block of getting the right sort of distribution. Scores of the best directors, writers, and players in the industry have been saving up pet ideas for the day when they might produce independently. Scores of financial men and bankers have looked longingly at this game, and have spent much time checking it over, only to find themselves up against a brick wall when it came to getting what they wanted in the way of individual selling.

The feature of "The Unit Method" of the Guaranty Sales Corporation which attracted more attention than any other, was the fact that each film will receive the concentrated exploitation and selling services of one group of men, who will have nothing else to sell, exploit, or think about.

The direct payment of rental moneys, the simultaneous booking while the film is hot, and the automatic elimination of the first run bug bear where necessary, were also points which called forth an unusual amount of commendation.

I don't remember when, in this industry, an announcement, was made at a more timely moment. Just as Mr. Hayes, speaking for the big producing companies, steps forth with an announcement that all of the creative forces are to be handled as the big bosses see fit, along comes the Guaranty Sales Corporation with a method of selling worth while product that points a clear road to success for every capable writer, player, or director in the industry.

I started by asking you if you had had your argument about "The Unit Method." If you haven't sat down for an hour's discussion of this plan you are the better part of a week behind most everyone else in Hollywood, and I would suggest that you sit down and try to kick holes in it. By golly, I think I'm about as good a hole kicker as there is in this industry, and I haven't been able to find a loophole in this method of selling big enough to stick a needle through.

Folks, it's a big thing.

Reviews This Week

THE DRAMATIC LIFE OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN . . . . Rockett-Lincoln

WOMAN PROOF . . . . . Paramount

THE GOLD DIGGERS . Warner Brothers

SOFT BOILED . . . . . Fox

THE ISLE OF VANISHING MEN . . . . . W. F. Alder

The "Explanations" Have Been Right Funny

Now it's all explained. Everyone has taken a shot at giving his own particular diagram as to why Famous-Lasky decided to shut down.

In New York they registered a lot of good laughs. All of the company heads took occasion to issue a statement which started out by congratulating Mr. Zukor for having the courage to close down his plant in order to reduce the cost of production overhead, etc., and then they all finished up their statements by explaining that, of course, they were going to go ahead full blast because their production program had been "carefully thought out and planned far in advance," so that there was no necessity for them to suddenly make a radical change.

Joe Schenck, in a statement, sets forth the explanation that the closing down idea is principally for the purpose of reducing salaries. That's interesting. Bill Hayes comes forward with a statement that all of the producers are going to try to cut down on production and distribution overhead.

It is very interesting to read all of these statements. It is particularly interesting to note how cheerfully these prominent executives admit that they have been running their business rather extravagantly. The idea that they are going to automatically decrease salaries and production costs by shutting down for a time is rather laughable.

They all admit that they are going to try to make better pictures. Then here is the real situation. If they don't all admit it, they certainly all know that there happens to be a very limited supply of creative brains in this industry. The competition for the limited supply of creative brains will continue to be very keen, and consequently salaries will go up rather than down for all the really capable creative factors, who will be so badly needed in the making of the better films.

There seems to be a tone in the statements of Mr. Schenck and Mr. Hayes rather resenting the high salaries being paid to players. It is plainly set forth that the producers will make an effort to work together in order to keep from paying big salaries to the capable people, or to the people who have box office names.

They have never openly admitted it before but the producers have been trying to work together in that manner for some time. If anyone should happen to ask you about it, I could tell you that one reason some of the productions made by these producers have been so rotten is because these producers have been trying to use those players who might be under contract to one of the producers in this little group, instead of going into the open field and selecting the player best fitted for the part.

Apparently they fail to recognize the fact that there will always be competition, and very keen competition, in the production of films. There will always be independents becoming stronger and stronger.

Every year new popular favorites prove themselves, and naturally those players are much sought after, and consequently, those players get the fat salaries.

With all due respect for the opinions and desires of Mr. Schenck, Mr. Hayes, Mr. Zukor, and others, I insist that their own statements that they are preparing to make better films automatically answers any argument which might be brought up about salaries. We have

never had enough of the better people in the film business, and certainly in the past the better people have never been given enough personal authority or we would have had more better films. With additional authority given to the better creators, there will naturally be an increase in salaries to go with the authority.

This production shut-down conversation is all a lot of apple sauce. Certainly you will find a lot of curb-stone conversation about it here in Hollywood, but if you will check up carefully you will find that those who do the most talking have probably never worked on the Lasky lot in their lives. Now I ask you, if a man has never worked on the Lasky lot, and probably never will, how can a few weeks shutdown there bother him? So far as the other studios are concerned, there will be just as much work, or more, because the film business was never healthier, and bigger pictures, and better pictures, will be made this winter than ever before in the history of the industry.

All you have to have this year is ability. If you can't prove that you have ability, then it might be a good idea to get a job driving a truck. If you are a capable writer, director, assistant director, cameraman, technical man, star or player you can bet your last piece of Hollywood real estate that this year will bring you greater opportunities than you have ever had before. Don't let anyone tell you different. All you have to do is let 'em know what you can do. They're gonna be lookin' for good people this winter harder than ever before because they must turn out better product.

———o———

Charlie Burr is going to make "Three o'Clock in the Morning." Well, maybe, but it seems that folks have sort of passed on to new loves since then.

Quarterly Now on Press

The first issue of Wid's Quarterly is on the press. It will be dated December 1st and will contain the reviews of the last three months, including those in this issue.

I have arranged the dates of the Quarterly so that it will be printed in November, February, May and August, which months are the beginning of our four season breaks in this industry. The most important of these is the fall season and by this arrangement we will go to press on August 15th next fall with the issue dated September 1st.

Regularly the quarterly will contain all the reviews written in the preceding three months, but in this first issue I am giving, in addition to the reviews of recent weeks, reviews of some of the more important films that were reviewed in early issues far in advance of release.

"HE'S NOT THE TYPE!"

"WELL, WHO IS THIS GUY

E. Alyn (Fred) Warren?

"GOT HIS NUMBER?"

Tremendous Educational Entertainment Value, A Cleanup

The Dramatic Life of Abraham Lincoln

Rockett-Lincoln Special

Length 12 Reels

DIRECTOR..... Phil Rosen

AUTHOR..... Frances Marion

CAMERAMAN.....Bob Kurrle and Lyman Broening

GET 'EM IN.....Biggest box office possibility I have seen this year.

PLEASE 'EM.....This has tremendous educational value, and is absolutely entertaining for all classes.

WHOOZINIT.....A very wonderful cast, dominated by George Billings as Lincoln.

SPECIAL APPEAL.....This has exceptional value in pulling folks who seldom come to films, in addition to all regular customers.

STORY VALUES.....While this really is biography, it has been presented with human high spots that make it very good dramatic entertainment.

TREATMENT.....From start to finish characters are kept real so that you get sensation of actually seeing real Lincoln and real people who figured in his life.

CHARACTERIZATIONS.....Billings' Lincoln is astounding. There is a wonderful cast, with every character fitting in without any jarring note. You never think costumes because players are always human.

ARTISTIC VALUES.....Photographically this is delightful, with spectacular values giving size without seeming at any time forced into the action.

Well, they've done it.

Some months ago I told you that I thought the Rockett boys, Phil Rosen and Frances Marion had a wonderful box-office value in their Lincoln picture, and that I had a hunch that they were going to deliver a real picture. This production, in my opinion, is the biggest thing that I have seen this year, and really, I believe that it has greater box-office possibilities than any film I have ever seen. That's a pretty extravagant statement, but I am basing this on the fact that they have delivered good entertainment value for any film fan anywhere, and in addition to that have presented a marvelous visualization of one of America's greatest men, which means that you can call out of their homes millions of folks who never would think of going to see the ordinary film entertainment, no matter how unusual it might be. This has all of the historical value of "The Covered Wagon" and a great deal more from an educational viewpoint. As a production it stands right at the top of the list.

You never think of George Billings as an actor. He is Lincoln all the way. Of course, he never acted before, but that makes the results secured by Phil Rosen in handling this man that much more worthy of enthusiastic commendation.

There are so many good bits presented by the exceptionally large cast that it seems wrong to attempt to point out any particular players. The characters which were the most prominent in the action were Ruth Clifford as Ann Rutledge, Nell Craig as Mrs. Lincoln, William Humphrey as Stephen A. Douglas, William Moran as John Wilkes Booth, Danny Hoy as the boy Lincoln, Wescott Clarke as Lincoln's father, Walter Rodgers as General Grant. Such a well-known player as Louise Fazenda does a bit, so you can understand what a really remarkable cast figures in this offering.

As I said some time ago, the Rockett boys are deserving wonderful credit for having produced a film of this calibre on a really independent basis. An exceptional amount of research work was done, and the scenario prepared by Frances Marion has brought to the screen the story of Lincoln in a manner that no other medium has ever equalled. Millions of people will get a conception of the Civil War period, and of Lincoln, from this picture, that the schools, histories, and novels could never visualize for them.

They start this off with a bang by dedicating it to the veterans of the world war, and there are scores of spots throughout the offering that are sure fire for applause and even cheers. All of this has been accomplished without, at any time, leaning too far on the "give us your kind applause" angle.

There are wonderful bits of pathos, and surely no one can see this without mentally living with Lincoln through his big moments. An exceptionally capable bit of work has been done in not only presenting Lincoln's life, but in tying it together smoothly so that the human characterizations register effectively, and you go from incident to incident without undue jarring.

From the incident of Lincoln's birth during a blizzard, right up to the sequence in New Salem covering his love affair with Ann Rutledge, the film has an exceptional appeal from the romantic viewpoint. The beginning of Lincoln's political career is nicely developed, and the second part of the film is devoted to Lincoln's life as President. The most wonderful thing to me about the last half of this film is the fact that they have not only registered the important, big events in which Lincoln figured, but they have managed to give a very definite visualization of Lincoln's state of mind from the beginning of the war up to the time of his assassination.

Really, the Lincoln visualized by Mr. Billings was positively uncanny. The battle scenes and all the spectacular shots were good, but were always only a background against which they presented Lincoln and his problems. The assassination sequence was exceptionally well done, providing a wonderful dramatic climax to a most remarkable film.

Lookin' Out the Window in Hollywood

Well, C. B. DeMille says he's gonna be with Lasky for life and they're gonna go ahead full blast. And that's that.

———o———

The success of a number of "Dialogue plays" on the screen is sure gonna start something. "The Bad Man" and "The Gold Diggers" both depended upon dialogue. With adaptations that give the good comedy lines from the plays as titles I believe we have had another lesson in these things that so many folks have said couldn't be done. I have always insisted that characterization, good bits of business and fine titles make the best combination for real entertainment, but the film bosses have always preferred action to characterization and titles. I think this winter will see the characterization players and the clever title writers coming into their own for the big dough. They are going to take the place of the big sets in making the better pictuers for next season.

———o———

Nothing hands the exhibitor a bigger laugh than to see the ads in trade papers carrying a phrase or a line from this or that publication. To begin with the publication means nothing in his life even if the entire notice were used, and furthermore, a good phrase could be picked out of the worst notice ever given any film by anyone.

———o———

Nothing is sillier than the conversation that has been pulled recently in certain publications saying that the industry must start making cheaper films because the theaters can't possibly pay enough rentals to pay for the expensive ones. Of course such conversion comes from New York, where the knowledge of the film business possessed by most people is the ability to use a pencil on table cloths and mahogany desks to figure and figure until they "outfigure" the creative factors who are really the important brains of the industry and the theater owners who provide all the money that the New York crowd does all the figuring about. Honest now, isn't that a fact? How many New Yorkers do you know who could either produce a film or successfully operate a theater? They can figure, yes, but the day is coming when producers and theater owners are going to get a little closer together and then the "figurators" will be out of luck. Tell me, if you can, of any good picture ever made that didn't make money. Don't take somebody's word for it. Get the facts. The point is that if its really good the cost is really incidental. The thing which has New York worried is not the high cost of good pictures but the high cost of poor pictures. Many of the companies have just learned that they can't get a huge gross with a poor or an ordinary film. The solution is not to quit making expensive films. The answer is "quit making ordinary films." There is nothing new about this state of affairs. The cost of the "bloomers" has been gradually getting higher and higher but we have always had too many ordinary films and never enough good ones. It is certainly a wonderful thing for the capable people in the industry if we have reached the stage where the expensive bloomers have become so expensive that they can't make money but I'm still afraid that they may get out alive on some of them and so take another year or two to learn the lesson that it actually requires brains more than dollars to make good motion pictures.

———o———

Charlie Ray worked a few weeks in a "speakie" road show, filed an attachment and quit. Someone must have been kidding Charlie when they told him he could get $5,000 a week out of a "speakie" road show. He should have asked Mr. Erlanger or Mr. Shubert what the highest price might be that they ever paid the star of a road show.

———o———

I understand that the Lasky scenario department is working full speed to get out twenty stories so that ten companies will have two stories each ready to shoot when January 1st arrives. That doesn't exactly sound like a slump to me. January 1st is only eight weeks from now.

Very Crude Plot Provides Too Few Laughs

Woman Proof

Paramount

Length 8 Reels

DIRECTOR.....Alfred Greene

AUTHOR.....George Ade's story, adapted by Tom Geraghty.

CAMERAMAN.....Ernest Haller

GET 'EM IN.....Tom has quite a following, and title is good.

PLEASE 'EM.....There are some laughs, but it is pretty sick nearly all the way.

WHOOZINIT.....Tom Meighan, Lila Lee, Gertrude Astor, Louise Dresser, Vera Reynolds, John Sainpolis, Bobby Agnew, Charles Sellon, and other good players.

SPECIAL APPEAL.....There are good exploitation angles, but I wouldn't go too strong in billing this.

STORY VALUES.....A very ancient basic structure without any new twist.

TREATMENT.....The players were there but tons of opportunities were missed.

CHARACTERIZATIONS.....Everyone had routine stuff, with Sellon doing his crab bachelor character.

ARTISTIC VALUES.....Photography and general production values were good, with a few interesting dam shots, but there was nothing to knock you cold.

I'm surprised at George Ade.

Somehow I can't help but feel that George has decided that the film game is just soft money, and that he has drifted into the group of authors, with names, who are willing to take the dough and let most anything go out as one of their brain children.

This was a terribly ancient plot structure, being none other than the w. k. will thing, where all four children had to be married within a certain time or lose a million apiece. They had five years to do it, but in order to make it a plot, we found all of them unhitched with a month to go.

Either of two treatments might have done something towards making this entertainment. We were shown that Tom's brother and his two sisters were all lined up to be married to three people, who apparently were not willing to marry them unless they were going to get the million. That certainly is not the American conception of the right sort of happy marriage. If they had allowed the month to elapse without Tom getting married, only to have him wed after the money had been sacrificed, that would have been one novelty. It had been proved that Tom didn't need the money, because he had just completed a dam costing a million and a half, apparently on a contract which he had financed himself. Another treatment would have been to have shown, as they did, the brother and two sisters ready to marry three people who wanted the millions. If they had had each of these three discover that the person ready to marry them would only do so if they got the million it would have been effective to have had each of them turn this person down, to marry someone else, picked out as a real mate, when it was thought that the money was gone forever. With that sort of treatment they could have brought Tom through to a marriage at the last minute, giving better sympathy to the other characters, who would have gotten the money after all.

As this thing is written now, your audience is going to think that all of the characters are all wet. They started off at a disadvantage in having waited until the last month to consider getting married, and when the marriage plans develop as screened the entire lot are a thoroughly unsympathetic crew.

A broader farce or hokum treatment might have saved this, because, of course, the author will tell you that it was not to be taken seriously. Unfortunately they have sprinkled a little melodrama, and as screened it is apparently something that you are supposed to accept as a more or less serious comedy drama.

The one hope for this is in the fact that nearly everyone likes Tom Meighan, and, of course, Tom does his routine stuff. There are some other good personalities in the cast, and if this gets through with your gang you can know that it is certainly the cast which saves it.

Lila Lee has entirely changed her style. In this she looked more like Lois Wilson than she did like the Lila Lee of some time back.

Most everyone will expect them to do something different some place down the line in the development of this plot. I have a hunch that every audience will be waiting for the twist, and when they don't get one they'll probably walk out with a very definite feeling of disappointment.

There were a few flashes of a big dam under construction, and a few shots of an ocean liner heading for Europe, that were interesting, but outside of these bits the action was very much routine movie.

Tom Meighan is a mighty fine boy. Tom has a personality that wins you, and it seems to me that it is almost pathetic to give him such poor material. George Ade's name may produce the proper amount of awe to pull a good sized check from the Paramount organization, but you only need to check up with your gang when they leave the theatre to learn that the folks who are laying down their dough at the box office window won't have a very high opinion of George, after seeing this. I may be doing Mr. Ade an injustice. Maybe he thinks this is good. If he does, I would advise him to go to school to some of the greatly scorned gag men who provide real comedy stuff for our screens.

Victor Schertzinger

Author and Director of

"THE MAN LIFE PASSED BY"

A Victor Schertzinger Production

Director of Jackie Coogan in

"LONG LIVE THE KING" and "THE BOY OF FLANDERS"

Percy Marmont

"THE MAN LIFE PASSED BY"

A Victor Schertzinger Production

Gertrude Short

"Paula" in

"THE MAN LIFE PASSED BY"

Directed by Victor Schertzinger

Care of Wid's Weekly
Holly 1062

Cullen Landis

as

The Secretary

in

"THE MAN LIFE PASSED BY"

Under the direction of Victor Schertzinger

Lydia Knott

in

"THE MAN LIFE PASSED BY"
A Victor Schertzinger Production

"A WOMAN OF PARIS"
Directed by Charles Spencer Chaplin

"HELD TO ANSWER"
Directed by Harold Shaw

568-373

Arthur Rankin

"THE CALL OF THE CANYON"
Directed by
Victor Fleming for Lasky

"BEYOND THE VEIL"
Directed by
Frederick Bond

"RAGS" DEMPSTER
in
FIGHTING BLOOD SERIES
Directed by Mal St. Clair

In Production
"DISCONTENTED HUSBANDS"
Directed by
Edward Le Saint
For Waldorf Productions

Preparing
"THE BEAUTY HUNGER"
With Theda Bara
Directed by
Tod Browning
for B. P. Fineman

Hollywood 3871

Comedy Values Make This Real Entertainment

The Gold Diggers

Warner Brothers

Length 9 Reels

DIRECTOR.....Harry Beaumont

AUTHOR.....Avery Hopwood's play, adapted by Grant Carpenter.

CAMERAMAN.....David Abel

GET 'EM IN.....This should be sure fire box office draw. It has great exploitation possibilities.

PLEASE 'EM.....As a comedy this wins. The drama misses, but it earns plenty of good laughs.

WHOOZINIT.....Louise Fazenda, Alec Francis, Hope Hampton, Wyndham Standing, Gertrude Short, Johnny Harron, Margaret Seddon, Ann Cornwall, Jed Prouty, and other good players.

SPECIAL APPEAL.....Don't depend only on this being successful play. Use exploitation angles the title provides.

STORY VALUES....Basically this is characterization studies, showing chorus girls at home.

TREATMENT.....They have leaned entirely on comedy, losing dramatic moments of play.

CHARACTERIZATIONS.....Miss Fazenda and Alec Francis steal the picture. Gertrude Short earns some laughs. Others are merely presenting story mechanics.

ARTISTIC VALUES.....General staging entirely satisfactory, with good lightings and compositions.

This earns enough laughs to ride anywhere as a corking bit of comedy entertainment.

Presented as a play, the author and the players managed to pull an emotional wallop here and there by having you get something of the struggle that some girls go through in the New York chorus girl battle. On the screen they have featured the comedy angle all the way, and when it comes to the emotional bits they only figure as little romantic touches that pull the story threads together.

As screened Louise Fazenda and Alec Francis walk away with the picture. Hope Hampton does the part that Ina Claire played in the play, but only we who know that this is the star part will realize that the thing was not built for Miss Fazenda and Mr. Francis.

Unfortunately Miss Hampton does not look so good in this offering. Somehow she fails to get you, and consequently the film runs along without her affair with Wyndham Standing ever amounting to anything more than a thread of romance about as important as the secondary romance between Johnny Harron and Ann Cornwall.

I believe that they have made a mistake in starting this off with a sequence that tells us immediately what a beautiful character Miss Hampton is playing. They lose a lot of the carefully balanced dramatic development which Hopwood registered in his construction.

Miss Fazenda gives us a hokum characterization. She is the central figure all the way. It is really too bad that they didn't give her a little more chance to get the human note across as in the play, because Miss Fazenda is a very capable girl, and she could have put over the pathetic touches if they had given her the stuff to work with.

I am not complaining that they have concentrated on the comedy end of this because I think film fans are hungry for good comedy. I do feel that the comedy would have been even more effective if they had slipped in a bit of nicely timed pathos here and there. I know Harry Beaumont can direct such emotional touches, and the cast can do them, so that it must be that the script lacked these bits. Well, I guess the only answer is, "We can't have everything."

In selling this to your fans I would advise you against leaning too heavily on the fact that it was a successful play. Just remember that we have had a lot of successful plays that have flopped on the screen. This title provides tons of exploitation possibilities. Step on it hard, and particularly emphasize the fact that you are presenting it as a comedy.

Fortunately most folks will not be sufficiently familiar with this play to know that it had any definite dramatic value. You can lay heavy on the comedy strength, and if they come looking only for comedy they certainly should be well satisfied because they surely earn a goodly quota of laughs in this.

Gertrude Short made her stuff stand out, and Margaret Seddon, as Miss Hampton's mother, had you convinced that Hope was a good girl just by looking at her mother. Jed Prouty was a regular man about town, and Peggy Brown, Edna Tichenor, Frances Ross, and Arita Gillman did the chorus girls most satisfactorily. Johnny Harron and Ann Cornwall loomed up nicely in the opening sequences, but rather faded off in the background as the film progressed. They are a couple of good kids. Louise Beaudet, one of our good old friends of the screen, did the bit of Cissie Gray, the former Follies beauty who had descended to the task of selling soap. Marie Prade got a couple of twinkles out of Sadie.

Robert M. Marks

Juvenile and Character Heavies

1714 McCadden Place

Tel. 570-671

Just to Remind You

Gara W. Brown

Thank You.

Good Comedy Hampered By Poor Meller Stuff

Soft Boiled

Fox

Length 7 Reels

DIRECTOR.....Jack Blyestone

AUTHORS.....Eddie Moran and Jack Blyestone

CAMERAMAN..... Don Clark

GET 'EM IN.....Promising Mix in straight comedy may help this at box office.

PLEASE 'EM.....It has lots of action, and some hokum comedy that earns laughs. It will get through but they won't rave over it.

WHOOZINIT.....Tom Mix, Billie Dove, Frank Beal, Tom Wilson and other good players.

SPECIAL APPEAL.....Bill this as a fast comedy with a few fights. That should interest many.

STORY VALUES.....They should have made this straight comedy. The melodrama doesn't convince and the serious fights add very little.

TREATMENT.....Much of the comedy hokum has good value. If it had been played throughout as straight comedy it would have been much better.

CHARACTERIZATIONS.....Tom Wilson, as nigger butler, and Frank Beal, did good comedy stuff. Tom Mix, Miss Dove, and other players were routine movie melodramatic figures.

ARTISTIC VALUES.....Cabaret shots dressed it up a bit. They provide good lobby material.

If they had just made up their minds that this was a comedy and had played it that way all the way through it might have scored very heavily.

They really earn a lot of laughs with good hokum and the repetition of certain gags, but every now and then they insist upon injecting the routine Tom Mix hero and shero stuff, and those sequences pulled it right down into the movie class. The basis of the plot was one of those "will things," with Tom placed in the position that he could not fight for thirty days, and that provided part of the comedy. Instead of doing something at the end, as Harold Lloyd might have done, to get a big laugh out of the fight that had been anticipated and talked about so much, they give us a serious fight, and it was blah because fights have ceased to be dramatic and are really of little value in this sort of offering, unless played entirely for comedy.

Frank Beal, as Tom's uncle, had a wild temper, and Tom had one himself. They got some good stuff over the efforts of the two to control their tempers. The gag of having Tom Wilson, the butler, bring Beal a new cane every time he busted one developed into a very good laugh, after a few repetitions.

Miss Dove had one of those stick around parts, and in fact, no one had much to do except Tom Mix, Tom Wilson and Frank Beal.

Most of this was played in a cabaret roadhouse, which Tom was forced to manage for thirty days without losing his temper. They worked in some cabaret stuff that looked rather good, and the costumes of the girls will probably help pull you a few quarters.

They played around a little with the prohibition stuff, by having Tom wreck every bottle of liquor that loomed up in the roadhouse, and they took a quiet shot at the reformers by having one of the heavies a scheming blue laws crook.

Fully eighty per cent of the laughs were earned by business in which Tom Wilson figured. He registered right all the way, and was a decided help to the offering.

Mr. Mix worked hard and did a lot of good stuff, but really I think it was a mistake to let him swing into the melodramatic fight, because he was doing very nicely in comedy, and they could have topped this off with some comedy gags, covering the fight, that would have made it ring true all the way, and register as much better entertainment.

There were some pieces of business in this that indicated that they had a pretty good comedy gag man figuring in the making of this somewhere, but the age-old basic plot, and the use of the movie bromide situations, such as shero visiting the tenements and hero fighting all over the house at the finish, rather proved that the dominant mind rather failed to realize that they had come very near to turning out a real success starring Tom Mix.

The bit where Tom Wilson took the waiters of the roadhouse out of the pool one by one and led them into an adjoining room to be caressed by his trusty razor was much better entertainment than the wild fight that the hero and willun were having up on the roof at the same time.

Wid's 11-10-23

Quaint Old French Settings

AND A

Cosmopolitan Atmosphere

Each so Delicately Blended Into the Other as to Make it Distinctive

CAFE DES BEAUX ARTS

1810 Cahuenga

PAT HARMON

"Oil Kirby" in the "ETERNAL STRUGGLE," directed by Reginald Barker. First Mate in "SUPERSTITION," directed by Jack O'Brien. The Heavy in "THE MIDNIGHT GUEST," directed by Geo. Archainbaud. In production: playing the heavy in "COURTING CALAMITY," with Hoot Gibson, directed by Ed Sedgewick. Riding, fighting, and anything pertaining to athletics.

Address care of Wid's Weekly

Of Interest to Producers

In addition to the new "trust fund plan" and the many other advantages offered to producers by the SELZNICK DISTRIBUTING CORPORATION and the STANDARD CINEMA CORPORATION, making them most desirable outlets for feature productions and short subjects, respectively, attention should be given to the calibre of the men who are directing the affairs of these concerns, and who stand in back of the organizations.

Look them over.

RALPH B. ITTELSON
MARK HYMAN
W. C. J. DOOLITTLE
CHARLES E. PAIN
MOTLEY H. FLINT
MYRON SELZNICK
WALTER SELZNICK
WALTER JEROME GREEN

It will be to the interest of all producers to confer with the SELZNICK WEST COAST REPRESENTATIVE before taking definite steps in regard to the distribution of their product.

JAMES DENT

West Coast Representative
Selznick Distributing Corporation
Standard Cinema Corporation

6411 Hollywood Blvd. Holly 1292

Title Will Pull Business But Film is a Flop

The Isle of Vanishing Men

Length 7 Reels

DIRECTOR.....W. F. Alder

AUTHOR.....W. F. Alder, titles by Al Cohn

CAMERAMAN.....John W. Boyle

GET 'EM IN.....This has good title, and may prove surprisingly good box office draw.

PLEASE 'EM.....I think it is tedious and tiresome, without any real kick to justify it, but fans may accept it on educational angle.

WHOOZINIT.....A lot of natives wearing funny Headdresses.

SPECIAL APPEAL.....Let it ride on the title. Don't play up cannibal angle, because they don't get that over in the film.

STORY VALUES.....This is supposedly from book written by Alder, but it fails to carry you along as narrative should.

TREATMENT.....This is badly in need of better tying together and more comedy titles.

CHARACTERIZATIONS.....There were some funny faces, but you got tired looking at them when they failed to hand you a laugh.

ARTISTIC VALUES.....Occasionally there was a beautiful shot, but most of it was rather ordinary photographically.

Figured as an instructive, educational picture, I think this is very poor. Figured as entertainment, I think it is worse.

The title has a good box office value, and may pull you a lot of business, but I cannot feel that audiences will be in any way impressed by this offering. They fail utterly to intelligently present the interesting facts which might have been set forth regarding this race photographed in the South Sea Islands, and the titles fail to play hard enough for laughs where a comedy strain might have relieved the entire offering.

After seeing this you come away with a definite impression that somewhere, in some far distant island, there are a lot of niggers who run around without wearing much of anything except a very elaborate headdress. If anyone can get much more of an impression than that, then I say that they are mind readers.

In the laying out of the titles they have made an effort to convince you that these people are cannibals. Maybe they were once, but I am willing to bet dollars to doughnuts that those photographed have never knowingly eaten any humans.

The effort to convince you that the author director and his staff were in danger of being eaten fell pathetically flat. The very forced attempt to make a dance, apparently staged for the party, seem to be some wonderful ritual, during which enemy natives were secretly eaten, was the bunk, and rather an insult to your intelligence.

These niggers did wear very funny headdresses. That item was interesting, but it was given so much footage that it became rather tiresome, particularly when, in the titles, the making of the headdress was offered as part of the wonderful ritual dance to come. They talked about this big affair through a coupla reels, and then when they finally got to it, it was such a flop that I am sure most fans will leave your house with a sort of sunken feeling, after having spent the evening with you.

There is just one possible out for you on a thing of this sort. You should present it as is, without taking any personal responsibility for the authenticity of the pictures or titles, and hope that most of your fans will be afraid to make too serious an objection for fear of demonstrating their ignorance. This has a chance of getting by in the same manner that grand opera gets over with a lot of people. They are afraid to admit that they don't like it for fear that they will be admitting a mental weakness.

Outside of the headdresses, the most interesting thing which I gathered from this entire offering was the manner in which they shipped pigs, having each one done up in a bamboo basket, making it possible to stack them aboard ship most conveniently. This bit came in a lot of straight travelogue footage that preceded the arrival of the party at the island of the alleged cannibals.

I am quite surprised that they did not go after this with a set of comedy gag titles. If this had been treated from start to finish with a set of titles that would have reached for every possible laugh, it could have been lifted most decidedly, and probably have been made good entertainment. It may be that because Mr. Alder has written a book about this trip, he would not want to have the stuff kidded, but certainly, as I see it, this could be shot full of comedy titles, presumably written by the white folks who were in the exploring party, and handled in that manner they could have gathered enough laughs to make this please anywhere.

Soft pedal on the personal promises, and you can probably make some money on this without getting murdered for showing it.

CHARLES A. POST

as

"Nicholas"

in

"WILD ORANGES"

King Vidor Production
For Goldwyn

A Few Moments Will Save You Many Thousands!

It will not take you long to become familiar with the many time saving and quality giving values of the Mitchell Camera.

You will appreciate our suggestion more after you have taken the few moments necessary to investigate these values.

Why not do it today?

We thank you.

Mitchell Camera Corporation

6025 Santa Monica Blvd. Los Angeles, Cal.

PERSONALLY EDITED BY WID

THE FILM AUTHORITY

Wid's

WEEKLY

PUBLISHED IN HOLLYWOOD

VOL 1 NO. 26

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 1923

Subscription $10.00 per year

Glen Cavender

Character
Hero

Current
Release

THE MAN FROM
BRODNEY'S

Charles "Buck" Jones

(Fox Film Star)

Says of Chiropractic

"After a hard day's work at the studio or a strenuous day on location there is nothing like a good chiropractic adjustment to take the fatigue out of you. It's as invigorating as a workout in the gym or a swim in the surf. And Dr. Schuster, the movie chiropractor, is the lad who can give you such an adjustment. He's an ace at his profession and is doing a lot of good for the picture people. I'm for him strong. Yes, he is painless."

Dear Friends:

My Scientific Method is restoring Health to Ailing folk. My work and Faith are bound up in Chiropractic.

It is without question the Supreme System of Scientific Healing. Of this, 75% of the Motion Picture profession are profoundly convinced.

In one unique respect I differ from all other Chiropractors.

It is this: I have adopted as my office maxim:

A take-your-time policy! Everything without Hurry.

This policy adds 25% to my Patients' chances for recovery.

I take the courteous liberty of saying that 999 out of every 1000 need Chiropractic. If you need me—I am here to Serve you Faithfully.

Do not wait until you get sick or worse, but Call 436-724 for an appointment, at the office or your home.

DR. W. I. SCHUSTER

Scientific Chiropractor and Nerve Specialist

(PALMER GRADUATE)

Licensed in California

RESIDENCE CALLS MADE

Office Hours:
10 to 12 and 2 to 5
Monday, Wednesday and Friday
6 to 8 P. M.
LADY IN ATTENDANCE

203 Bogardus Building
Corner Sunset and Western
Hollywood, California
Office Telephone 436-724
Residence Telephone 598-222
PRIVATE DRESSING ROOMS

A Health Service Right at Your Door. Save Your Time and Strength. Avoid the Downtown Rush.

WHERE THE SICK GO TO GET WELL. ASK ANY STAR

Wid's
Weekly

Vol. I. No. 26 Saturday, November 24, 1923 Price 25c

Editor - - - - - - - - - Wid Gunning

Subscription $10.00 one year in United States. Foreign $15.00. Subscribers should remit with order.

Editorial and Business Offices:

6411 Hollywood Blvd., (Hollywood) Los Angeles, Calif.
Phone Holly. 1062.

Entered as second class matter September 29th, 1923, at the Post Office at Los Angeles, California, under the act of March 3, 1879.

How About Salaries Paid to Executives?

After all the arguments and "statements" it seems that cutting salaries is what the producers really would like to accomplish. Surely there's nothing new about that. It is generally accepted that at all times everyone in any business would like to engage anyone they need at the lowest salary possible.

The "shutdown" scare is all over. Everyone now is trying to explain how they are going to make better pictures than ever before. I hope they do. I sure love to see good films.

In regard to the salary discussion which has been getting quite a lot of attention, there are some interesting angles that should be considered. The salaries listed by Billy Brandt, and published in last week's issue, caused a lot of comment. One of our best known players, a man who has no grievance because he has worked with great regularity for years at a very nice salary, has called to my attention a thing which I have commented on before. In all the commotion that the various folks make about the salaries of creative artists, have you ever heard of any New York film boss stepping into print with a statement regarding the large salaries paid to the executives of the producing companies? Have you heard any authentic figures regarding the fortunes made by individuals high up in some of the more prominent producing organizations?

I happen to know that there are a good many executives associated with producing and distributing organizations who declare themselves in on very fancy salaries, which is one reason the "dear public" rarely receives any exceptional dividend from their stock holdings of the big organizations.

The artist whom I mentioned above said to me, very aptly, that if we were to check through the list of folks who have made the really big fortunes in this business we will find that most of them are either producers or producer executives. Very few of the creative artists, unless they themselves have been producers, have been able to make any tremendous fortune from their salaries. The turning of the argument to one of high salaries for the creative artists is rather a case of making a noise to cover over the fact that the heralded "shutdown" will not happen. The producers know that they will not be able to buy good artists any cheaper. As a matter of fact, they know that they will have to pay more than ever before for the capable creative artists, if they hope to make better films.

I would like to have Billy Brandt take the time to make up a list of salaries and profits paid to various individual executives in the big producing and distributing corporations. If he would print that list it might start a good argument.

—o—

Titles and Editing Have Added Millions in Value

The Hunchback of Notre Dame is now a tremendous production that will make millions. I saw the re-edited film at the opening here in Los Angeles, and was delighted to find

Reviews This Week

WILD BILL HICKOK . **W. S. Hart-Paramount**

RENO . . . . . **Rupert Hughes-Goldwyn**

THE MAIL MAN . . . **Emory Johnson-F. B. O.**

MAYTIME . . . . . **Gasnier-Shulberg Preferred**

THE RENDEZVOUS . . . . . **Neilan-Goldwyn**

that Universal had managed to not only pull the story threads together, but had also secured someone capable of writing titles in plain English, that got over everything necessary, without pulling you out of the picture by the constant use of too much language.

The re-editing of this most important production points very clearly a thing which I have talked about for years and years. I have always contended that the cutting and titling of any film is a task which should not be undertaken by those who made it, without capable outside assistance. It is the most natural thing in the world for people who have been too close to a big film to entirely lose their perspective on it.

I have personally sat in on the reconstruction of many big films. I sat in on all the final cuttings of "The Miracle Man," and worded all the titles of that production. I never have dreamed that I might, in any way, approach the genius of the late George Loane Tucker as a director, but Mr. Tucker realized always the advantage of having the association of an understanding mind when it came to the work of cutting and titling. As a matter of fact, my first association with Mr. Tucker, which became almost immediately afterwards an equal partnership, developed through his having come into my office in the Times Building in New York many years ago to ask me to help him in the editing of some productions which he had made in England. One of these was "The Manxman."

I was never more in earnest in my life than when I registered a most emphatic opinion that the Hunchback of Notre Dame was very much in need of editing. Lon Chaney and Perly Poore Sheehan were both associated with Mr. Tucker and myself while Mr. Tucker was producing. Both of these boys, and Wallace Worsley, the director, are great friends of mine. I have always been very friendly with the Universal organization, particularly with Mr. Laemmle and R. H. Cochrane. I was delighted when I heard that they had decided to re-edit this film. I was more than delighted as I saw reel after reel roll across the screen and realized that enough attention had been given to this big subject to get it over right.

As the Hunchback now runs, it is a great drama, dominated by Lon Chaney's marvelous characterization. Some people have wondered whether this characterization was too gruesome. The best answer I can give to that is to remind them that Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde was always gruesome. Certainly Lon Chaney, as the Hunchback, will win the sympathy of every member of any audience. That is an achievement. Despite the horrible appearance of this character you become so thoroughly in sympathy with him that you forget entirely that you are watching an actor and think only of the character.

This film has been improved to such an extent that it would be impossible to estimate the value added. The story runs smoothly now, with good tempo, and the conflicting dramatic elements register their contrasting values effectively without allowing the interest to sag or die.

Of course, the spectacular values of the Hunchback have always been tremendous. It is truly a big film. There is only one point of prime importance that I feel could have been better handled in the cutting, and that is the sequence where Norman Kerry starts to call out the garrison and begins his ride to the rescue of Notre Dame. The fact that these guards are on the way to the rescue takes quite a lot away from the value of the Hunchback's single handed defense of the Cathedral.

The change in the titles alone made a tremendous difference in the smoothness of this offering. The alterations made in the few comedy spots helped materially. Some folks wonder why I point out little things that are wrong with pictures sometimes. The reason is that a little bit of business or a glaring inconsistency of plot structure frequently mars an entire reel that follows, and there is nothing that hurts a film more than a number of bad comedy spots that miss fire completely.

I am certainly glad that the Hunchback has been re-edited and titled. I understand that several well known film men worked on this production in New York, and I know that Mr. Chaney made a special trip to the East to help in this work. You can figure this as a wonderful special, worthy of all the exploitation backing that you can devise. It is now a genuine achievement in screen visualization.

Let's Be Conservative

One of the things that hurts this business is the constant "get rich quick" conversation.

More independent projects have been ruined by "money back and 100% profit in nine months" promises than from any other cause.

To be true lots of money has been made fast and much more will be made fast in the future, but let's get more conservative in our thoughts, our promises, our conversation and our planning.

Men who invest in other industries do not plan to show any big profit for two or three years.

Conservative investors do not expect their money back in a few months.

Any intelligently conducted, honest, film producing organization can show a very handsome profit.

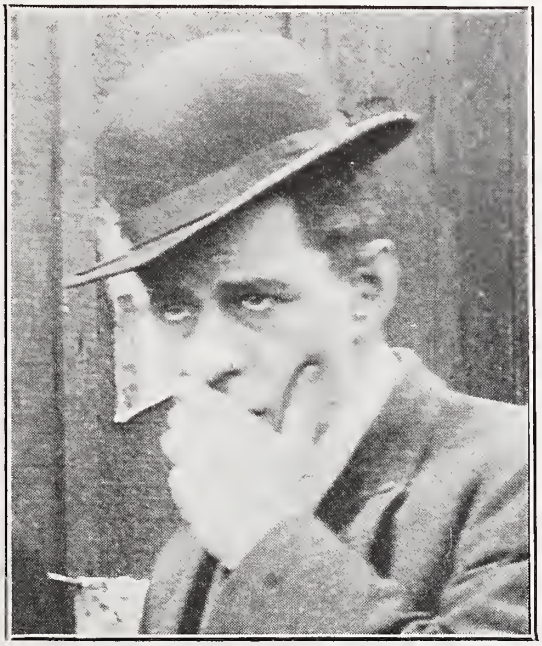
There never was such a marvelous opportunity as there is now for some honest, conservative, intelligent financial house to come into this industry and secure for the really capable creative forces the necessary financial backing to enable them to produce independently.

"HE'S NOT THE TYPE!"

"WELL, WHO IS THIS GUY

E. Alyn (Fred) Warren?

"GOT HIS NUMBER?"



E. Alyn (Fred) Warren

— in a —

D. W. Griffith Production

E. Alyn (Fred) Warren

— in a —

Rupert Julian Production

Historical Significance Helps Bill Hart's Return

Wild Bill Hickok

William S. Hart-Paramount
Length 7 Reels

DIRECTOR.....Clifford S. Smith

AUTHOR.....William S. Hart

CAMERAMEN....Dwight Warren and Arthur Reeves

GET 'EM IN.....Bill Hart's return to the screen is sure fire at the box office, particularly in a historical subject.

PLEASE 'EM.....Historical significance, the several fights, and calling the bad man's bluff, give this better entertainment value than the routine Hart production of old.

WHOOZINIT.....Bill Hart, Ethel Grey Terry, Kathleen O'Connor, and good cast.

SPECIAL APPEAL.....Dwell particularly on fact that Wild Bill Hickok was one of the great killers of bad men, who helped clean up the early West.

STORY VALUE.....This was naturally episodic, but some of the mechanics used in reaching dramatic moments were not so good.

TREATMENT.....The highspots were effective except "fight of water barrels," which would have been much bigger kick if more clearly presented. I would like to have seen what happened to Wild Bill at the end.

CHARACTERIZATIONS.....Hart dominated and made you believe character really capable of calling bad man's bluff. Other players quite satisfactory, although they registered nothing that stood out particularly.

ARTISTIC VALUES.....Early West atmosphere gotten over very well, with very little attempt for particularly artistic photography.

Bill Hart is back. That alone is enough to pull a lot of real business, because there are some millions of fans in this country who do like action, and they know that Bill is gonna hand 'em at least four or five snappy highspots in any film which he presents.

Bill comes back in a story of historical significance, since he presents something of the life of one of the most interesting men who lived in the days of the early West. The historical angle will be of very material assistance in getting business on this because it will justify many folks in suggesting to their friends that they go see Bill in this, where otherwise they might have a feeling that they shouldn't admit the liking which they have for seeing the two-gun man in action.

I can remember many years ago in New York having a long talk with Bill about Wild Bill Hickok. I know that Bill has always felt that Wild Bill was one of the greatest men that this country ever produced. Feeling so keenly that Hickok was a great man, Bill has naturally put a lot of power into his characterization of this personal hero of his.

They get this off to a good start by having Wild Bill presented to President Lincoln, and except for rather a crude Lincoln, this scene is decidedly impressive. We then get a slant of Wild Bill's life as the keeper of a horse changing station on the early overland stage coach route. Bill gets a call from a crew of bad boys, who were known as the McCord gang, and there is a fight that will tickle any lover of action from seven to seventy. This fight at Red Butte gets over particularly because of its actually having happened. Bill kills off the whole gang by his deadly aim, and finally finishes a struggle with the leader, with both men apparently gone. Bill recovered and was next seen resigning his job as Marshal because he had had to kill fourteen men doing his duty. Most of the story was devoted to Bill's experiences in Dodge City, which town he helped to clean up, when forced into action again as a deputy of Bat Masterson. The leader of the bad men in Dodge City was Jack McQueen, and Bill had to call McQueen's bluff several times, when unarmed, in a manner that certainly proved his nerve. After his eyesight had begun to fail, Bill still had the nerve to go to McQueen's saloon, where the bad man was surrounded by his gang, and force him into a duel, where he gave McQueen the advantage of the draw and still killed him.

The fight in which Bill helped to clean out Dodge City was called "The Fight of the Water Barrels" because many of the gun fighters were hiding behind water barrels. There was a certain amount of kick in this, but much of the value was lost by failure to clearly establish the location of the various fighting men. As screened it looked as if Wild Bill stood out in the middle of the street, under an arc lamp, and shot down fifteen or twenty men who were hiding behind a barricade, without any of these men being able to hit him, even though he was a glaring target.

Bill's love affair was sort of a three corner matter, with Calamity Jane, played by Ethel Gray Terry, constantly trying to get Bill to fall for her. Bill fell in love with a weakling Easterner's wife before he knew that she was married. Bill proved he was a regular fellow by helping friend husband, and there is a great kick registered in the poker game where Bill and his gambler friends all lose to the Eastern husband, even though Bill has to throw away three kings and then four of a kind in one hand to let the poor sap take the pot.

Unfortunately they resorted entirely too frequently to mechanics that were a bit crude. The girl who was McQueen's sweetie seemed to spend most of her time sticking around somewhere to overhear important pieces of conversation which would lead up to the next situation. They rather overdid this eavesdropping thing.

Lookin' Out the Window in Hollywood

Those who put the finishing touches on films are still the unsung heroes of filmland. Of course frequently those who finally cut and title big productions do not want "screen credit," but it seemed odd to see the new version of "The Hunchback of Notre Dame" and note that the men who re-edited this film successfully in New York received no recognition whatever on either the screen or the program.

Allen Holubar is gone. He was a fine boy. Our business is so young that it is a particularly keen loss when one of the prominent figures passes out. Allen was one of the boys who proved what could be done in this marvelous industry. He stepped to the top in a hurry. It is a pity he had to go just as he was beginning a wonderful new contract. Dorothy Phillips (Mrs. Holubar) certainly must know that the entire industry extends heartfelt sympathy. He was a fine boy.

All the noise and all the "statements" seem to indicate the desire on the part of several of the big companies to combine. I don't think they will ever accomplish it, because two points could never be agreed upon. First they could never decide who would be boss, and second they could never agree on the worth of the so-called assets of the various companies. Each fellow would insist that his statement of assets was correct. Knowing in his heart that it was inflated, he would think that the other fellow had inflated his—and there you are. That's what has kept them apart for years. Joe Godsol, the big chief of Goldwyn, advocates a combination for physical distribution, but personally I can't believe that it will ever be accomplished. There are too many little "big men" in this game who think their success has come from personal ability, where actually they are "accidents." Joe is a regular fellow. There are a few other big men among the bosses, but not enough.

In all the discussion recently, quite a lot has been said about producer-controlled theaters and exhibitor combinations that keep films out of the theaters. I contend that these evils have always been tremendously exaggerated, and I think some producers have purposely enlarged upon these evils and kept talking about them in order to frighten the independent producer. As a matter of actuality, the theaters are crying for good films and if any producer has a really fine film that he can't get booked I would sure like to hear about it. To be true, they can't all play at once, but what does it matter which month they start in any particular section? If they are real films they will get real rentals and plenty of bookings. The number of producer-distributor controlled theaters in this country is less than twenty per cent of the total theaters. A film can never figure to play in more than about forty to fifty per cent of all the theaters, because half of the houses are direct "opposition" to the other half. If the producer only needs to figure on playing at the most fifty per cent of the total houses, he can certainly disregard the twenty per cent producer-distributor controlled houses. Show me where I'm wrong on that, if you can.

Already they are getting mighty busy preparing to make new big films. The coming year will be the best the industry has ever known for the capable people. The artist who can deliver need only let the fact be known in order to cash in on the better films prosperity wave.

Fox has announced that he's going to spend twenty millions more or less. Well, after all, what's a few millions among friends when the press agent is sending out the story. Undoubtedly Fox, like all the rest of the gang, is planning to make a lot of big stuff for next year because the boys have discovered some great possibilities in this reserved seat, advanced price method of presenting the truly big films.

I'm still waiting for some one to show me one of these "nine months guarantee" contracts that really guarantees anything. I've talked with a lot of the brothers but haven't found anything in any of the contracts yet except that stuff they say Hell is paved with, "Good Intentions."

Interesting Yes But Hardly Dramatic or Entertaining

Reno

Rupert Hughes-Goldwin
Length 7 Reels

DIRECTOR.....Rupert Hughes

AUTHOR.....Rupert Hughes

CAMERAMAN.....John Mescall

GET 'EM IN.....This has interesting exploitation possibilities, and should pull good business.

PLEASE 'EM.....Except for information concerning divorce law tangles, this is just a movie. It falls considerably short of being pleasing special.

WHOOZINIT.....Carmel Myers, Helene Chadwick, Lew Cody, George Walsh, Dale Fuller, Hedda Hopper, and a good many players in small parts.

SPECIAL APPEAL.....Concentrate everything on this being exposition of this country's contradictory divorce laws.

STORY VALUES.....No solution is presented except killing muchly married husband in movie style.

TREATMENT.....Action is very episodic and simply presents possible tangles without registering much drama.

CHARACTERIZATIONS.....Principals and entire cast give satisfying performances, but character of story blocks them from any emotional register that is effective.

ARTISTIC VALUES.....Generally sets and locations are quite satisfactory. There were some beautiful shots.

Director Author Hughes gives us in this a visualization of the troubles a muchly married man can encounter if he travels about in this country and cares to worry over the state laws. This visualization may be of some value in showing just how ridiculous this situation is. As entertainment the offering is only fair, because we have no dramatic highspots, and the finish, where the muchly married man is killed off, is very much crude movie.

This starts off splendidly, except that we get two proposals on an Atlantic City beach in the same family, on one afternoon, and that seems rather speedy after the Reno divorce-marriage opening. The balance of the film is very episodic, with the characters touring the country, in order that the author may make his points regarding the contradictory divorce laws existing in various states.

Mr. Hughes manages to show us that Lew Cody had no wife in one state, a coupla wives in another state, and three when he got to South Carolina. We also had it explained that some southern states permitted girls to marry too young, and that the South Carolina no divorce law made it pretty tough on the poor soul who married a beast.

I am inclined to believe that most folks who see this will be disappointed in the offering from an entertainment viewpoint, because the last half of it fails to build to any good dramatic situations, and at the finish the principals are rather arbitrarily gathered together in Yellowstone Park, for a movie fight, in which Lew Cody is killed. The only purpose, apparently, in bringing them all to Yellowstone Park for a finish was that the author wanted to make his point that human emotions are very much like the Yellowstone geysers, they can't be pent up. The finish of having Lew thrown into a geyser and shot out again into the air will hardly get a thrill, because even the children know that such things are faked. It was too bad that no one paid any attention to Lew's body at the end. They sort of left him flat and went to the clutch. It would have been a bit better to have played this finish more naturally.

Undoubtedly this title and the exploitation possibilities of the divorce question provide material that will bring business, if intelligently used. There is a splendid cast, with plenty of names to talk about, and it should not be a hard trick to get 'em in. I would recommend particularly that you sell this carefully as a visualization of the tangles caused by contradictory laws, rather than as a big drama. In other words, you must be careful not to lead them to expect a solution, because there is none of course, except a uniform law for all states. Even that does not rectify the problem of what happens to the children when they begin to have too many papas and mamas.

I believe you can figure this to get by safely, but it is a special in theme only, and you must be careful as to exactly how you present it. Some very good players were used for bits only, the rather extensive cast including the following: Helene Chadwick, Lew Cody, George Walsh, Carmel Myers, Hedda Hopper, Dale Fuller, Kathleen Key, Rush Hughes, Marjorie Bonner, William Orlamond, Howard Truesdale, Robert Devilbiss, Virginia Loomis, Richard Wayne, Lucien Littlefield, Hughie Mack, Boyce Combe, Victor Potel, Percy Hemus, Maxine Elliott Hicks, Evelyn Sherman, Jack Curtis, Patterson Dial and Gertrude Short.

From

"Who's Who in America"

TULLY MARSHALL, actor; b. Nevada City, California; s. William Lemen Phillips and Julia Mattie (Tully) P.; educated University of Santa Clara (Cal.); m. Marion Neiswanger ("Marion Fairfax," dramatist), of Richmond, Va., June 7, 1899. Debut as "Fred Carter," in "Saratoga," Winter Garden, San Francisco, Mar. 12, 1883, with stock co.s on Pacific Coast several years; later with Boucicault, the elder; Fanny Davenport, Margaret Mather, Rose Wood, Mrs. D. P. Bowers, McKee Rankin, Modjeska, E. H. Sothern, Charles Frohman's co.s and others; prod. "The Builders," Belasco Theatre, Pittsburg, 1907; played "Joe Brooks" in "Paid in Full," Astor Theatre, New York, 1908; as "Hannock," in "The City," 1909-11; prod. "The Talker," Colonial Theatre, Cleveland, O., and starred as "Harry Lennox," 1912-13; as "Jim Martin," in "The Trap," 1914; in moving pictures as star with Griffith-Fine Arts, 1915; Lasky, 1916; Famous Players-Lasky, 1917-19. Home: Hollywood, California.

Human Bits and Meller Action Make It Entertain

The Mail Man

Emory Johnson-F. B. O.
Length 7 Reels

DIRECTOR.....Emory Johnson
AUTHOR.....Mrs. Emilie Johnson
CAMERAMAN.....Ross Fisher
GET 'EM IN.....Title sounds like propaganda, so you must sell this hard as thrilling melodrama, with genuinely human characters and bits of business.
PLEASE 'EM.....Plot mechanics a bit crude, but exceptionally fine bits of business and incident make this very good elemental entertainment.
WHOOZINIT.....Ralph Lewis, Johnny Walker, Virginia True Boardman, and good cast.
SPECIAL APPEAL.....You automatically get postal service operatives and their friends, so sell this hard to the public as good melodrama.
STORY VALUES.....Mechanics creaked a bit and were jumpy, but it was dressed up with delightful human touches that lift it pretty high.
TREATMENT.....You came to feel that characters were real folk, and that is always a directorial achievement.
CHARACTERIZATIONS.....Lewis, Johnny Walker and Mrs. Boardman were excellent, with other players making their parts stand right up to specification. Personalities helped this a lot.
ARTISTIC VALUES.....Photography generally was very pleasing, with some exceptionally effective shots.

Oddly enough, I think the title is about the greatest handicap of this offering. I appreciate the fact that it has been geared to make a hero of the hard-worked postman, but I am afraid that many fans who would thoroughly enjoy this as entertainment may possibly sidestep it because they will think that it is boresome propaganda.

The director, working with material written by his mother, wins you in the first few reels by the careful use of delightful bits of business that serve to definitely establish all of the important characters as real folk, with whom you are in thorough sympathy.

With the characters nicely established, they bang into the first mail robbery, and this sequence is an exceptionally well done piece of melodrama. It is nicely timed.

In the first reel or two they get over some great stuff. The bit of the kids playing automobile, with the tiniest youngster playing the part of the smell, is a sure fire laugh, and the gag of the mail man's daughter turning on the garden sprinkler when Johnny Walker was stooped over it, only to have her mother step in Johnny's place at the critical moment, in order to get an underskirt drenching, is sure to bring down the house. The little touch of the delivery of the letter with the mourning band, and the bit of the lady who wanted the mail man to open a bottle for her helped nicely to present the varied tasks wished upon our hard working postman.

After the plot mechanics got under way there were several abrupt jumps, but these will be forgiven by most fans because the action picked up with a rush once the jolt caused by the jump has been forgotten. It seemed that they might have developed some better reason for the last minute race of Lewis to see his boy other than the fact that he had waited until the last minute to go to see the Governor and then had to break all speed laws in order to get back to the prison before his son was hung.

It would have been better to have had the owner of the yacht know about the mail boat carrying a million dollars instead of having Dave Kirby overhear this news, because the owner of the yacht seemed prepared for the robbery since he already had a box all set to handle the valuables to be stolen from the steamer. I believe there should have been some disposal of the mail robber's shoe other than to have Lewis burn it, because he certainly could not burn an old leather shoe in the kitchen stove without causing an odor that would thoroughly arouse the curiosity of the entire family.

Most any one will get a great kick out of the piece of business where the stray cur picked up by Lewis saves him from death during the first mail robbery.

The inner workings of the battle ships, and the shots showing the fleet in action, were beautifully presented, and my only real kick about the entire water sequence is the lack of a title indicating the lapse of time just before the boats begin firing. This title is absolutely essential because the searchlight stuff has been so effective that the sudden shift to daytime-photography tinted, fails to give the proper night effect. It would be very easy to suggest in a title that the first streaks of dawn were showing when the fleet sighted the yacht.

At the opening of this they use some good stuff, comparing the dove that flew to Noah's Ark with the modern mail aeroplane, and the stage coach with the train and steamer of today. They registered the Nation's Capitol and the American flag, so that this certainly gets away with applause and enthusiasm.

Mr. Lewis does a human, sincere characterization that rings true all the way. Johnny Walker is more pleasing than in anything that I have ever caught him in. He is thoroughly likeable and convincing. A girl who sat in front of me thought he was about the handsomest thing she had ever seen. They get through nicely without a love story, and the love of the mail man's family for one another was made more effective by the absence of any other romance. Virginia True Boardman was a great mother, and Martha Sleeper did a kid sister that was unusually good. Hardie Kirkland and Dave Kirby as the heavies, Taylor Graves, Josephine Adair, Richard Morris, and Rosemary Cooper added effective work in a cast of personalities that helped materially in making a straight melodrama, with a propaganda trend, prove entertainment decidedly above what most anyone will expect when they are going in to see a propaganda film.

SADIE CAMPBELL

as

Lincoln's childhood sweetheart
with Bill Hart in "Wild Bill Hickock"
—directed by Clifford Smith.

Gus Edwards predicts for this little protege of his a remarkable career.

THE LITTLE MINISTER
THE MERRY-GO-ROUND
TO HAVE AND TO HOLD
IF YOU BELIEVE IT, IT'S SO
PENROD AND SAM
THE INFIDEL
SHADOWS OF THE NORTH

Featured in Century Comedies as leading lady opposite Buddy Messinger

598-418

Miss Shannon and Song May Put This Over

Maytime

Gasnier-Schulberg-Preferred
Length 8 Reels

DIRECTOR .....Louis Gasnier

AUTHOR.....Rita Johnson Young's play adapted by Olga Printzlau.

CAMERAMAN.....Karl Struss

GET 'EM IN.....You can arouse interest by featuring Shannon and fact this was successful romantic musical show. Play up the song "Sweetheart."

PLEASE 'EM.....Personalities and pleasing light romance carry first part nicely, but it flops in old age sequence, and final modern situations are very much movie.

WHOOZINIT.....Ethel Shannon, Harrison Ford, Wallace McDonald, and good cast.

SPECIAL APPEAL....The contrasting of Grandma's days with this jazz age may be good exploitation slant.

STORY VALUES....Basically this was poor picture material, and final added sequences injure it instead of helping it.

TREATMENT.....They didn't play for enough laughs, the old age stuff falls flat, and too much footage has been given to crude modern episodes.

CHARACTERIZATIONS....Miss Shannon, Mr. Ford, and Mr. McDonald win hands down in the first few reels. After the delightful early romance scenes no one really gets you again.

ARTISTIC VALUES.....Some wonderfully beautiful shots, with exceptionally good photography, particularly in first half of film.

This gets away wonderfully. There is a delightful little romance, beautifully done, that carries you through the first half of the film thoroughly pleased with the players, the situations, the photography, and the production in general. Then we hit a lapse of time break, showing the same characters old and gray, and this short sequence flops hard. They have added at the end a modern story showing the children of the characters that started the film, with their romance presented with jazz trimmings.

There are two things that will undoubtedly make a tremendous impression upon anyone that sees this, and these two values may be big enough to stamp this into the minds of most of your customers as very good entertainment. Those two values were Miss Ethel Shannon, and the frequent planting of a music cue for the song "Sweetheart," which was the great hit of this musical show.

I have mentioned Ethel Shannon several times where her work stood out when doing more or less inconsequential parts, but never did I suspect that this young lady would prove such a marvelous beauty on the screen when given the advantage of the best of lightings. Through the first few reels Miss Shannon will make so many friends that it is possible that she may be able to carry this across to success upon her own shoulders.

Harrison Ford is a satisfactory hero, but he was better in the very first scenes than he was later on in the film. Wallace McDonald did an excellent scornful heavy, and there were a number of other players, including Robert McKim, John Steppling, Clara Bow, Netta Westcott, Betty Francisco, and Josef Swickard, who helped with good moments. The burden of the comedy rested with William Norris, who appeared in the original cast of the musical play, and Mr. Norris managed to give us quite a number of laughs. The film needed a great deal more comedy, and I cannot understand why they sacrificed the character of P. T. Barnum, who appeared in the play, together with other characters and pieces of business that could have developed laughs.

Certainly this should sell a tremendous number of copies of the song hit of the show. They have very carefully arranged so that this song may be used as the love theme all through the film, and the words have been flashed on the screen several times, so that even an audience unfamiliar with the air will probably be whistling or humming it as they leave your house. This is one production that will be helped tremendously by the proper playing of this one song.

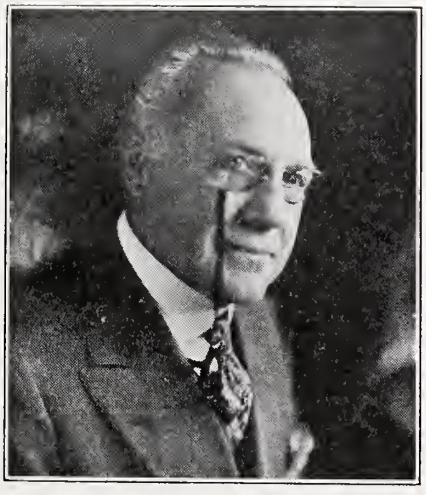
The plot of this play was very slender and had to do only with the fact that a pair of young lovers were separated, with the hero returning, rich, just too late. When the shero was old and gray, friend hero came in in time to save her house and furniture from being sold at auction. On the screen they have given us a modern story with the children of these young people a generation later, and this would have been all very well except that the mechanics used to bring about a clash between them were very decidedly crude. The sympathy was rather scattered in the modern version through such incidents as having Mr. Ford drive up to see Miss Shannon, with a chorus girl from a musical show sitting in his roadster out in front, waiting for him. That was about as weird a piece of business as I have caught in some time.

They had Bob McKim, as the villun, trick Miss Shannon into his apartment by a fake phone call, and then the whole party, who were spilling the spirits in Norris' apartment above McKim's, for no reason at all, picked on a young doctor who just happened in to take him down to cure McKim's headache, thereby discovering shero, Miss Shannon, in McKim's apartment. When no one would believe her story, Miss Shannon rushed out through the storm and started to run away from the home which hero's father had bought for her mother. Then the obliging lightning gave a wallop to the old apple tree, under which the lovers of the previous generation had planted a memento of their love, and the apple tree fell on Miss Shannon, thereby keeping her from running away. To make the clutch in some way different they used a color process which was very pretty but it sorta slaps you in the eye since the characters, of course, look different in natural color.

559-440

Wheeler Oakman

Everyone agrees that the day of collar ad heroes has passed. Wid has been kind enough to say that my hero characters have meant something.



Chas. K. French

Recent Releases:

"A WOMAN OF PARIS"—Charles Chaplin.

"A MILE A MINUTE ROMEO"—Tom Mix—Fox Prod.

"GENTLE JULIA"—All-Star Cast—Fox Prod.

In Production: "COURTIN' CALAMITY"
Hoot Gibson—For Universal

ATTENTION

Producers and Directors

THE

RAY LA VERNE

Motion Picture
Casting Agency

Is Prepared to Furnish

HIGH CLASS ARTISTS

for

Parts and Bits

'THE HOUSE OF SERVICE'

1521 No. Bronson Ave.

Sketchy But Menace High Spots Are Effective

The Rendezvous

Marshall Neilan-Goldwyn

Length 7 Reels

DIRECTOR.....Marshall Neilan

AUTHOR.....Madelaine Ruthven

CAMERAMAN.....David Kesson

GET 'EM IN....Russian revolution period exploitation angle may pull some business.

PLEASE 'EM.....It is very choppy and jumpy, but several effective spots, where heavy menaces shero, may pull this through.

WHOOZINIT.....Lucille Ricksen, Elmo Lincoln, Conrad Nagel, Sydney Chaplin, Eugenie Besserer, Richard C. Travers, Emmett Corrigan, Kathleen Key, Lucien Littlefield, Max Davidson, Kate Lester, Cecil Holland and R. O. Pennell.

SPECIAL APPEAL.....You can feature Lincoln as exceptionally terrifying willun, and Miss Ricksen as dramatic find, mentioning Neilan's direction.

STORY VALUES.....This had novel ending, with good highspots to make it effective play, but as filmed it is too sketchy.

TREATMENT.....This would have been decidedly improved with continuity that would have held it together much tighter. The titles are not so good.

CHARACTERIZATIONS.....Lincoln is marvelous menace, Miss Ricksen very effective in emotional moments, Miss Besserer excellent, with other players satisfactory.

ARTISTIC VALUES.....Russian atmosphere is registered splendidly, with some very good composition.

The old maxim that a play is as strong as its menace should put this one way up the list, because Elmo Lincoln sure puts over a brutal heavy that will not be forgotten. There are some effective highspots, but unfortunately the film is very sketchy and jumpy through the first four or five reels, and for that reason it loses much of its effectiveness. They would have had a much more wonderful value if this had been made in a short five reels, sticking very closely to the dramatic moments and comedy relief, as originally presented in play form.

There is too much checker board shifting of players around through the first few reels, and this choppy action is made even worse by titles that failed to smooth it out.

Syd Chaplin, as the comedy relief, gets some laughs, but some of his stuff is too broad, and most of it doesn't get the laugh value that was apparently expected. Mickey and Syd probably had a lot of fun shooting this stuff, but the laughs don't register as regularly as they should.

This entire story has to do with a little girl of noble parents reared by a Russian peasant in Siberia, who finds herself forced into the position of becoming the wife of a bandit, which rather gums up her love affair with a young American soldier.

The dramatic scenes which have the greatest value are the several spots in which Miss Ricksen is beaten and threatened by Elmo Lincoln, the bandit heavy. In one of these beatings the shero's ear drums are broken and she loses her hearing. At the end the heavy is accidentally locked in a stone shrine that had been built in memory of the girl's mother by her father and she could not hear his cries, thereby leaving him to die.

They get this away to an effective start by a couple of shots registering the atmosphere of the Russian palace when the Czar was still in power, and then we see Richard Travers and his bride in Siberia, where the bride dies. Emmett Corrigan rears Miss Ricksen as his own child.

Considerable credit is due for the fact that the Russian atmosphere is very good. This may ride with most fans simply because the few big scenes between the heavy and the shero have a very definite amount of kick in them. There were two or three times when the willun could have been and should have been killed, but, of course, they had to save him for the trick ending.

I am inclined to believe that most of your fans will never have heard of this as a play, and so I would suggest that you concentrate your exploitation on the fact that this is a story of Russia and Siberia at the time when the revolutionists came into power. I believe there is considerable interest in that period, and you may get quite a lot of business playing up that idea.

Mickey Neilan has quite a following, and his name should be of considerable value in your exploitation. Many of your fans may forgive the disconnected construction and development of this plot because of the good old situations where the brute heavy threatens his youthful wife.

Don't figure this as a big winner because it has too many weaknesses to ever knock anyone over as an unusually successful special. You can just about figure this to get by. In your exploitation go easy regarding the merits of the offering and devote your conversation more particularly to Elmo Lincoln, who does a wonderful bit of work, Miss Ricksen who proves herself a very capable youngster in emotional drama, and talk about Mickey Neilan as one of the gifted directors, capable of giving great moments to the screen.

All of the players did very effective work. This falls short more on account of the matter added to the original play than because of any other reason.

IF YOU ARE FAT

We give you a signed guarantee to reduce your weight or it costs you not one cent.

WITHOUT THE USE OF

Drugs, exercises, starvation diet, electrical massages, musical records, specially prepared foods, rubs, bath, blanket or steam sweats or gas.
We reduce your weight in your daily home or business life. No one needs to know when or how you are reducing. After you have lost your overweight there will be **no flabby flesh, wrinkles or hollow eyes**—instead you will have regained your figure and appearance and your health will have been improved.

PLEASE REMEMBER

We use no drugs, exercise, starvation diets, sweats, prepared food, tablets or pills in this remarkable and most amazing and most successful System of Reducing. It costs you not one cent if you fail to lose weight. That is as it should be—you have nothing to lose except—**your fat.**

AN INVITATION

We cordially invite you to call at our Hollywood office as our guest without the least obligation and permit us to fully and clearly explain any detail of this successful System of Reducing overweight quickly and safely. If you will do so we would appreciate it and you will weigh much less in one month from this day.

Office hours 9:30 a. m. to 5:00 p. m. Special appointments by phone (438-125) or letter.

Private Reception Room 212 Bogardus Building, N. W. Cor. Sunset and Western.

Worth Trying System of Reducing

1505 N. Western Ave. HOLLYWOOD, CALIFORNIA

Offices located Chicago—San Francisco—Bloomington, Ill.—Los Angeles

SPENDING YOUR OWN MONEY IS A GOOD TEST

When camera men start out to spend their own hard earned money to buy equipment with which to work—and they buy Mitchell cameras —then, Mr. Executive, there should be a thought there for you.

Mitchell cameras may cost more when you buy them, but they will answer your production economy problems because they save minutes and hours when even seconds run into big money.

Find out today why the better camera men are never happy until they have Mitchell cameras to work with.

We thank you.

MITCHELL CAMERA CORPORATION

6025 Santa Monica Blvd. Los Angeles, Cal.

PERSONALLY EDITED BY WID

THE FILM AUTHORITY

Wid's

WEEKLY

PUBLISHED IN HOLLYWOOD

VOL. 1 NO. 29

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 15, 1923

Subscription $10.00 per year

Bertram Grassby

Dear Friends:—
Your Machine:

What are you doing to it? What are you doing for it?
I mean the Machine that is You. YOURSELF.

999 people out of every thousand get pitifully low current out of their Machine—their BODY. And yet every human is a HIGH SPEED DYNAMO.

Unless you are getting comfort, Health, efficiency, ease, and pleasure in the operation of your Machine there is a Leak somewhere. Somewhere in your BODY there is a Serious waste of PRECIOUS ENERGY.

Right here is where my professional work applies. I can help YOU. I can help you be all you want to be physically. I MEAN THIS. My methods are simple, exact and scientific. YOU may be assured of highly beneficial results.

With courtesy and sincerity it is my honest desire to prove this to your complete and lasting satisfaction.

May I have the honor of looking after your Health welfare?

DR. W. I. SCHUSTER

Scientific Chiropractor and Nerve Specialist

(PALMER GRADUATE)

Licensed in California

RESIDENCE CALLS MADE

Office Hours:
10 to 12 and 2 to 5
Monday, Wednesday and Friday
6 to 8 P. M.
LADY IN ATTENDANCE

203 Bogardus Building
Corner Sunset and Western
Hollywood, California
Office Telephone 436-724
Residence Telephone 598-222
PRIVATE DRESSING ROOMS

A Health Service Right at Your Door. Save Your Time and Strength. Avoid the Downtown Rush.

WHERE THE SICK GO TO GET WELL. ASK ANY STAR

Wid's
Weekly

Vol. I. No. 29 Saturday, December 15, 1923 Price 25c

Editor - - - - - - - - - - Wid Gunning

Subscription $10.00 one year in United States. Foreign $15.00. Subscribers should remit with order.

Editorial and Business Offices:

6411 Hollywood Blvd., (Hollywood) Los Angeles, Calif.
Phone Holly. 1062.

Entered as second class matter September 29th, 1923, at the Post Office at Los Angeles, California, under the act of March 3, 1879.

I Believe Creators Will Get Chance

Constantly discussion of the problems of the industry bring forth the one and only salvation, which is independent production.

When I say independent production I really mean an independent market, because there can be no independent production without independent selling.

The big corporations who control the present existing distributing channels have all come to believe in the value of the unit production method of operation, but we will never solve this trouble, causing items such as high salaries and excessive production costs, until the creative factors can be placed on a basis of participating in the income derived from a production.

Writers, players, and directors back away from the percentage participation at this time because past experience has demonstrated that percentage participation, up to date, has rarely been fairly and properly paid.

Any thinking man promptly agrees that the right way to pay for creative effort is on a percentage basis. The creative factors all prefer such a method of payment. The next step to bring about real advancement in this industry is the establishment of a selling method which will guarantee to creative factors a fair and efficient distribution of the profits from their efforts, on a basis of paying to them a share of what their product really earns.

A plan of independent distribution which provides just that sort of fair return to the creator has been presented by the Guaranty Sales Corporation. I believe that the coming year will show this plan in operation to such an extent that gradually and surely it will become the accepted method of handling film sales.

For years I have done what I could to encourage the creative factors in this industry. I believe the coming season offers more opportunities than any year to date. If you are a bit uncertain as to how to proceed to accomplish your advancement in the coming year, come up and talk it over. Maybe I can give you a hunch that will help.

Finance has always been the real stumbling block that has kept the better creative factors out of independent producing.

A terrific lot of money has been "promoted" for independent films, but the fault has been that the "promoter" controlled the producing and selling operations, so that the real creative factors have been no better off working for such so-called "independent" organizations, than they were with the big producing-distributing companies.

The real creators are not "promoters." Yet many of them are excellent business men or have good business associates.

There is a wonderful field for the organization of a financing plan which will give the real creators a chance to work on percentage, rather than on big salaries, and with real incentive to make fine films economically.

All that is needed is to find financial men who will take the time to actually investigate the situation.

I believe there will be such a financial organization active in the field before spring.

There was never in any industry such a chance for very large profits with absolutely no chance to lose.

Reviews This Week

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS . . . . . **DeMille-Paramount**

THE VIRGINIAN . . . . . **Shulberg-Preferred**

THE JUDGMENT OF THE STORM . . . . . **Palmer Photoplay-F. B. O.**

THE CALL OF THE CANYON . . . **Paramount**

A MILE A MINUTE ROMEO . . . . . **Fox**

The Day of the "Adaptor" Is Coming

A story and a continuity are two entirely different things. Somehow, by constant hammering, that fact must be registered in the minds of those who are responsible for the production of films.

From every side we find enthusiastic agreement regarding the slogan, "The play's the thing." Having experimented quite extensively with sets, costumes and spectacular expenditure we find the big bosses frantically figuring on how to get good stories.

I am afraid that we may be swinging rapidly into that rut where we were a few years ago that called for the purchase of anything which had been printed or played in a theatre, regardless of its screen possibilities.

A few months ago I registered the thought, editorially, that every continuity is really an "original." In other words, I, at that time, hammered on the fact that the development of any story theme in the proper form for screen visualization meant that there must be sufficient changing to actually make the finished continuity a different bit of creative work from the story or play, or even original synopsis that had served as the ground work. Recently I have commented on the fact that productions like "The Bad Man," "If Winter Comes," "Six Cylinder Love," and a few others, had been transferred to the screen without radical change. I want to state, however, that in the preparation of the continuity for any film that it is a matter of making changes even though the same ideas and situations are presented. In other words, screen technique calls for placing the same material in a different form in order to achieve a result. In transferring a book to the screen it is necessary to tell in closeups, long shots, and by the use of cutting that provides tempo, what the author is able to devote many pages of descriptive phrases to present.

There has been an awful uproar from different quarters regarding the manner in which many well known plays and books have been fearfully manhandled in screen form. Certainly this criticism has been deserved. Some awful crimes have been committed in the visualization of successful plays and books.

A well known continuity writer wrote me this week regarding a few experiences he has had which indicate, however, that the producing bosses are frequently more responsible for changes being made than the actual adaptor. This man told me of two cases, and it so happens that I had personal knowledge of these same instances, where those who had good material had insisted that the material be radically changed in the making of the screen adaptation.

Of course, there is absolutely no alibi for ruining good screen material, and some of our producers should be shot for the way they add insult to injury when they buy a successful play or book, change the story, and then change the title.

The basic fault underlying this rather remarkable condition which exists beyond question is the fact that we have too few capable writers who can prepare a continuity that will actually deliver to the screen the full values from the original story which they are attempting to visualize.

One of the most common faults of continuity writers is the tendency to write two or three times as much characterization and incident as can possibly be shown in the finished product. Producers permit continuity writers to get away with this because of the alibi that it is better to have plenty of stuff than not to have enough. This is a very dangerous method of working because the finished product will of necessity lack proper development and balance, due to the inability of the director to lay the proper stress upon the more important moments.

Of course, the real underlying problem is the fact that no two minds, no matter how keenly developed, will ever visualize the same idea or incident in exactly the same manner. That fact has caused most of our story difficulties. A continuity prepared by one person and directed by another has invariably resulted in a clash because the same expressed words meant different things to the two people.

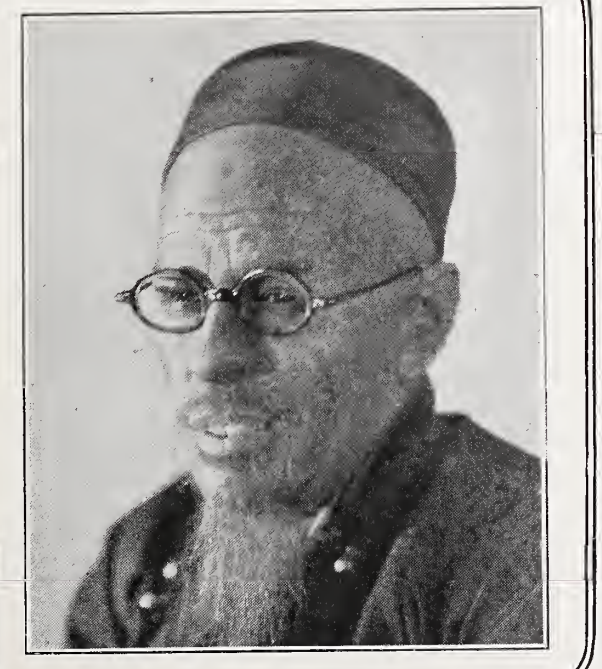
For years and years I have preached the necessity of unit production. I want to particularly warn the producers who are planning product for the coming season against attempting to operate under a method which prepares a script without the man who is to direct the script being placed in a position where he will have every possible opportunity to thoroughly grasp the visualization as conceived by the writers of the script. I am a thorough believer in collaboration in getting results on the screen. Collaboration means

co-operation, however, and it is silly to try to force two or three people to work together unless they can do so without personality clashes.

The buying of successful plays and books, or the purchase of splendid original stories, will be of no avail until the producers in this industry come to a realization of the need that exists for harmonious collaboration between the directors and the screen adaptors. Personally, I believe that an editorial mind, which is really a mind trained from a different viewpoint than the creative mind, should also sit in on the construction of a screen adaptation, because if the producers would only realize the fact they could actually save many fortunes every year by the elimination of ineffective and superfluous incidents before these sequences are actually filmed.

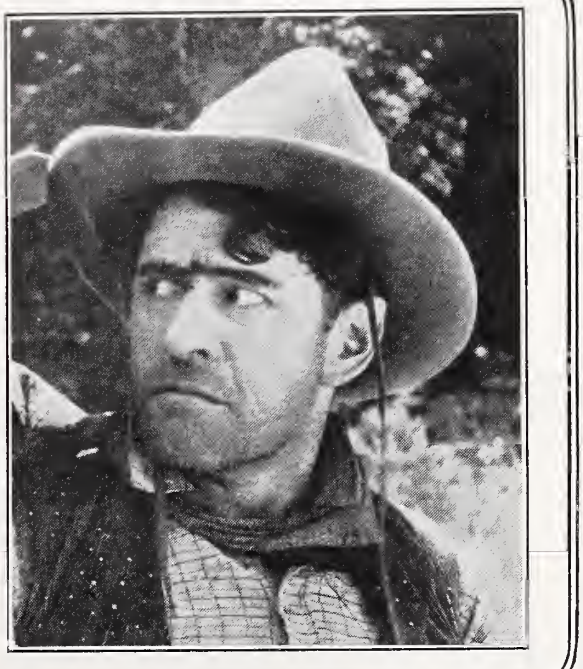
If we will just begin to profit by our past experiences we will progress more rapidly. Certainly anyone can check over the past five years and know that the purchase of a successful play or book does not guarantee that the screen visualization will be successful. A master director, with a great cast, can sometimes overcome the handicap of a poor continuity, but the biggest essential for producing success is intelligent adaptation. I sincerely hope that as the studios start their mad rush around the first of the year they will give particular consideration to the adaptation problem.

It is not surprising that we have so few capable screen adaptors. This work has been pitifully underpaid. It has been pathetic how little credit has ever been given for the work of adaptation. I believe that this year will develop some new names on the screen roll of honor, and I believe that before another year has rolled by that everyone in the industry will have a different attitude regarding the importance of the person who prepares the story in screen form. The writing of screen adaptations offers more opportunity than any department in this wonder industry. It is work of tremendous importance, and we have so few capable adaptors that I am afraid to tell you how few for fear that you would not believe it possible.



"Sure! This is"

E. Alyn (Fred) Warren



"And so is this"

E. Alyn (Fred) Warren

Spectacle Is a Triumph But Modern Story Misses

The Ten Commandments

C. B. DeMille—Paramount
Length 12 Reels.

DIRECTOR.....C. B. DeMille

AUTHOR.....Jeanie Macpherson

CAMERAMAN.....Bert Glennon, assisted by Edward S. Curtis, Peverell Marley, Fred Westerberg, Archibald Stout and Donald Biddle Keyes.

GET 'EM IN.....Exploitation as elaborate spectacle provides pulling power.

PLEASE 'EM.....Spectacular Biblical sequences beautiful and impressive, but modern story in last half misses despite players and good production values. General reaction will be intangibly unsatisfactory.

WHOOZINIT.....Theodore Roberts, Charles De Roche, Estelle Taylor, Rod La Rocque, Leatrice Joy, Richard Dix, Nita Naldi, Robert Edeson, Edythe Chapman, and good supporting cast.

SPECIAL APPEAL.....Religious themes are rather criss-crossed. Spectacular values are really only dependable exploitation slant.

STORY VALUE.....Visualization of Bible incidents was most effective. Modern sequences wandered rather ineffectively through meller situations, without hitting big dramatic climaxes.

TREATMENT.....Spectacular sequences and miracle of parting waters wonderfully effective, but modern story seemed to lack coherence and accumulative dramatic development. Players and production values were there but incidents didn't get you.

CHARACTERIZATIONS.....Theodore Roberts and De Roche dominated Biblical scenes, with Estelle Taylor doing good work. Rod La Rocque and Leatrice Joy registered some very good stuff in modern story, with Richard Dix, Nita Naldi, Edythe Chapman and Robert Edeson helping "movie" situations by their personalities.

ARTISTIC VALUES.....Color shots were quite wonderful, but switching from color to black and white attracted attention to technique. Generally production values were splendid. The parting of waters miracle was one of the best effects ever shown on the screen.

I suppose it is treason to state that any of these "super super" spectacles miss fire, but I am positive that most everyone who sees this will explain that it is "very wonderful, but——." Different folks will have different reactions regarding both the spectacular sequences and the modern story sequences, but I am very sure that 99 out of every hundred who see this will come away with a feeling of intangible disappointment mixed in with their thorough appreciation of the marvelous spectacular sequences which make up the first half of the film.

The spectacular prologue has to do entirely with the clash between Moses and Pharaoh preceding the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt, and the miracle of Pharaoh's pursuit when the waters were parted, only to come together again to destroy Pharaoh and his charioteers. This was building up to the sequence where Moses went up into the mountain and returned with the stone tablets bearing the Ten Commandments.

Anyone will get a big kick out of the parting of the waters effect. The first time they use the fireworks in the bringing forth of the commandments it is very effective. The too frequent repetition of the fireworks is not so good.

When we came to the modern story the spectacular scenes had prepared a state of mind decidedly receptive. The first modern sequence, however, presented a mother ordering a beloved son from her home because he questioned the Bible. The whole thing went out of gear right there.

As the modern story unfolded we found very effective production values, but story values which were crude meller and of ordinary movie quality.

The players in the modern story helped the scenes quite a lot, and it seemed for a time that they would be able to carry it along, but as the incidents unfolded there was no accumulative dramatic effect, and slowly, but surely, the thing sagged into the depths.

Rod La Rocque gave a splendid performance, and Leatrice Joy helped a lot. Edythe Chapman had an unsympathetic Puritanical mother part, and Richard Dix was made a "stick around for the finish" hero.

Nita Naldi and Robert Edeson added color as dramatic conflict characters, but all of these folks in the modern story were made to figure in action that had all the earmarks of the cheap movie meller stuff.

They registered one title in the modern story that had a wallop, where one of the sons said to his mother, "You have a cross in your hand, but you're using it like a whip." If that idea had been played up better it would have helped the modern story. There was too much action and too little thought registered in the modern sequences. The theme seemed to be that a mother who tried to force the Bible upon her children would be punished by having a church fall on her. I cannot feel that either the very religious or the non-religions will actually consider this something to cheer for.

There has been a terrific amount of propaganda about the excessive cost of this offering. It has been reported that the cost figures ran beyond a million and a half. Mr. DeMille told me that he had spent over a million dollars before he had started the modern sequence. The spectacular prologue was very wonderful, but I cannot see why it should have cost a million dollars.

The most glaring flaw I saw in the entire production was the fact that the sand in front of Pharaoh's palace was so deep that several chariots were wrecked in it. Surely the Egyptians, who could build such palaces, would have roadways that chariots could move about on.

Lookin' Out the Window in Hollywood

The boys down in New York are echoing some of my recent editorials. Well it's a good idea. You have to keep on hammering facts in this business if you want them to sink in. The Moving Picture World carries an editorial on the bad prints that are permitted to remain in circulation and the Motion Picture News commences to wonder about the theater policy needed to take care of big specials. If the gang down East would really concentrate all their guns on the faulty distribution methods we might get something done a bit sooner, but of course they can't step too heavy on the toes of the big corporations. With their excessive publication overhead expense the New York trade papers are pretty well licked these days. They have to be careful that they don't offend the big boys.

———o———

Al Lichtman is now general sales manager of Universal. It really is funny how things shift around in this business. Well, Al has a wonderful lot of friends and the big U is making films worth while these days. It should be a great tie up for both of them.

———o———

It is a pity to say it but I found that others shared the sensation with me. In watching "The Ten Commandments" I couldn't keep from expecting Theodore Roberts to start puffing on his cigar.

———o———

The October admission tax report showed that during that month the theaters did more business than during any month in two years. Now wouldn't it make you seasick. Here we have been getting calamity howls hurled broadcast into the public press for some weeks while the facts and figures prove wonderful prosperity. Lately I have had a new hunch on the shut down agitation. I like to think that my good friends among the big fellows are smart. I now have a new alibi for their recent shutdown propaganda broadcasting. There is a political battle on to remove the theater admission tax. Maybe, I say maybe, the big boys talked loud about disaster in the hope that it would help Congressmen to see the light in relieving the suffering industry from the taxation burden. Of course the actual October figures provide a real kickback on such a thought, but I would really like to feel that there was some justification somewhere for all the unfavorable, panicky, dirty linen publicity that went into the daily press recently.

———o———

It seems odd to have Paramount and First National cheering about their "Big Ten" features. Maybe we are through with the days of trying to turn out a hundred or more in one organization each year. I certainly hope so. It will be a happier day for everyone.

———o———

Hey, Bob Welsh, quit stealing my stuff. Whatdyemean "The title should be 'For No Good Reason'—" That's been one of my pets, Bob, now lay off him.

———o———

I hope all the bankers who are wondering if there is really anything the matter with the film business will get a copy of the October theater tax report. If the theaters are doing such a wonderful business then the answer surely registers that all that is needed is plenty of good pictures to deliver to the theaters. When the independent producers once get under way in the coming year this industry is going to make some wonderful steps forward.

———o———

If it will only start to rain out here I will be able to quit playing golf and work a little harder. Have been working the old mashie overtime lately sorta figuring each day that it would rain the next. Either it had better start raining or I'll have to just decide I'm a rotten putter anyway and confine my struggles to Sundays.

———o———

Carl Laemmle says "The Merry Go Round" is doing such a wonderful business that he figures it will break all existing records for bookings. That's good news for folks who can make good films. There is one that was turned loose in the middle of the summer without any roadshowing or other trick exploitation and it is cleaning up.

Good Character Stuff and Atmosphere Carry This

The Virginian

Schulberg—Preferred
Length 7 Reels

DIRECTOR.....Tom Forman

AUTHOR.....Owen Wister and Kirk Lashelle's play, adapted by Hope Loring and Louis Leighton.

CAMERAMAN.....Harry Perry

GET 'EM IN.....This was a very popular novel and if you exploit it intelligently it should pull a good business.

PLEASE 'EM.....This will please and be considered a good picture. It is not great nor will it call forth much enthusiastic recommendation.

WHOOZINIT.....Kenneth Harlan, Florence Vidor, Pat O'Malley, Russell Simpson, Raymond Hatton, and good supporting cast.

SPECIAL APPEAL.....Concentrate particularly on this being visualization of famous novel.

STORY VALUES.....Story thread is slender, but it provides plenty of good characterization.

TREATMENT.....They get two or three good emotional wallops, and tempo provides ample opportunity to register character intimacy.

CHARACTERIZATIONS.....All principal players registered effectively and it is their work that makes this entertainment.

ARTISTIC VALUES.....There were some wonderful exterior shots and atmosphere background throughout was splendid.

This is good entertainment because characterization was permitted to dominate over action, even though this was what might technically be termed a Western.

"The Virginian," as a book and play, achieved success because of the stress laid upon the characters, and fortunately the producers and adapters have seen fit to make this a character study rather than a melodrama.

This opens quietly and swings along with a convincing sincerity that makes you feel very much at home with the characters. Without overstressing the characterizations, they develop an intimacy that makes you think of the players as the characters they are presenting rather than as well known screen folk.

Because of the fact that this is not an action meller you will have to be careful to sell this to folks who will appreciate it, by hammering very hard on the fact that it is a faithful visualization of this famous character study and not a movie meller.

They get a good emotional wallop out of the sequence where the Virginian's pal, Steve, is caught and hung. They get a good kick out of the cold-blooded killing of Shorty by Trampas. The final meeting between the Virginian and Trampas does not register a thrill, but this would have been very hard to develop any suspense around because your audience is thoroughly convinced that the hero must live on, and so it was probably just as well to get this sequence over with in a hurry and get to the clutch. Possibly they might have made us believe that Miss Vidor was going to leave the Virginian if he killed Trampas by some different treatment. As screened there was never much question as to what the eventual outcome might be.

It seemed to me a bit jarring to find that the posse, headed by the Virginian, had so easily determined the whereabouts of the rustlers when they went out to search for them, and I think that that sequence could have been helped by better titles.

I was very sorry to see Trampas do the well known movie trick of shooting the hero and then taking it for granted he was dead, without ever troubling to investigate.

About the best real value in this is the fact that it moves quietly and pleasantly, with a development of characterizations that not only holds your attention but wins your sympathy. You come to really know all of the characters, and you thoroughly appreciate the quiet conflict between the players.

When I first heard that Ken Harlan was to do this part I was a bit dubious, but I must say that Ken has surely delivered a splendid bit of work. This is by far the best thing Ken has ever done on the screen and should help him wonderfully for the future.

Pat O'Malley had a difficult characterization, in that it was necessary for him to make you like him despite his weakness. Pat did it beautifully.

Russell Simpson was a splendid Trampas. He did the quiet bad man without unnecessary flourish, and for that reason his work was much more effective.

Florence Vidor had a pivotal character in that of Molly Wood. The entire story depended upon her being able to make the audience like her and yet register an appreciation of her state of mind. As a Vermont school teacher suddenly dropped into the far West, where a man was hung without question when caught stealing cattle, she had to get over the horror of it without antagonizing the audience, who would naturally feel that the hanging was entirely justified. Miss Vidor's characterization was very good indeed.

Raymond Hatton as Shorty, who had been saving for years to buy an accordion, gave this part enough sympathy to develop a genuine kick when he was shot down in cold blood.

The atmospheric values were splendid. Generally the photography was very good, and there was one bit, where Mr. Harlan and Miss Vidor were sitting in front of a waterfall, that was exceptionally beautiful.

FRANK NELSON

Phone
Holly 1062

Care
"Wid's"

MAKING A MAN

A GENTLEMAN OF LEISURE

STEPHEN STEPS OUT

WOMAN WITH FOUR FACES

THE DAY OF FAITH

Coming Up

SHADOWS OF PARIS
With Pola Negri
Directed by Herbert Brenon

THE STRANGER
—all Star Cast
Directed by Joseph Henaberry
—for Lasky

Bad Tempo Mars Heavily Exploited Original

Judgment of the Storm

Palmer Photoplay Corp.—F. B. O.
Length 6 Reels

DIRECTOR.....Del Andrews

AUTHOR.....Ethel Styles Middleton

CAMERAMEN.....Henry Sharp and Max Dupont

GET 'EM IN.....Extensive exploitation co-operation of producer gives this box-office value.

PLEASE 'EM.....This is interesting and will ride without criticism, although it is not a great picture.

WHOOZINIT.....Lucille Ricksen, Lloyd Hughes, Claire McDowell, Myrtle Stedman, George Hackathorne, Philo McCullough, Bruce Gordon, Frankie Darro and Fay McKenzie.

SPECIAL APPEAL.....Feature in your exploitation that this is original screen story written by author student.

STORY VALUES.....There were good basic situations, although coincidences figured too frequently in action.

TREATMENT.....Lack of good tempo was greatest weakness. They developed action rather than characterization.

CHARACTERIZATIONS.....They seemed so intent on keeping the story going that they did not permit players sufficient opportunity to emphasize characterizations.

ARTISTIC VALUES.....Generally atmosphere was quite satisfactory. There were a few sizable sets.

Here is an instance where good dramatic situations failed to register at full value because of the lack of pauses which would properly shift the tempo so as to give the right emotional kick to the climaxes. This story has good dramatic conflict, although the long arm of coincidence worked pretty hard in pulling the characters together to establish situations. There were good characters to work with, but the film lacks character shadings and bits of business to register the proper audience intimacy. They seemed so anxious to keep the action going that they disregarded entirely the problem of placing emphasis on the emotional highspots.

This story is the first of several chosen by the Palmer Photoplay Corporation for independent production as a means of encouraging the writing of original screen stories. The Palmer people have done some very extensive advertising in the national magazines regarding this production, and their campaign should help materially in selling this to the public. I believe that the original scenario exploitation angle will make it possible for you to do some real business with this, and although the film is not a great film, I believe that most any audience will be satisfied with it because certainly it is interesting.

In a nutshell, the idea of this story was that a young man was accidentally killed in a gambling house owned by the mother of a boy who was in love with the young man's sister. The boy had never known that his mother owned the gambling house. Finally, to make restitution, he took the place of the dead boy on the farm. At the end, in a snow storm, the mother who had owned the gambling house wandered through the blizzard and helped find two children belonging to the family, thereby being presumed to also have done her bit in the way of restitution for the death of the family's bread winner early in the film.

The mechanics of this plot were always obvious, the coincidences were jarring, yet a treatment which would have thrown much greater emphasis on characterization could have made of this a much better film.

Instead of permitting the son of the gambling house mother to come of his own accord to the farm house and offer his services, they established him in a cabin nearby, which was rather awkward. This treatment took much of the kick out of his offer of sacrifice.

In trying to bring the mother into the storm at the finish, for the purpose of helping to save the lost twins, they had her try to walk through a blizzard to the farm, even after she had been warned that it would be impossible to get anyone to try to drive her through. This was a case of forcing a situation.

At the first of the film the kid stuff on the windmill was sure fire. If they had played for more of that sort of comedy relief and characterization all the way, instead of concentrating on straight action, the highspots would have had much more value, and there might have been a few real emotional wallops.

Personally, I don't think much of this title from the viewpoint of box-office value, but you should figure this one entirely from the angle of securing the benefit of the very heavy exploitation that the Palmer Photoplay Corporation is giving this film. I would advise you to concentrate all of your attention upon registering the fact that this is an independently made production of an original story selected from the works of Palmer students. There is a novel interest about that angle that will pull business.

Your fans will not complain about this one. They may not enthuse particularly, but they will not understand exactly why the situations do not stir them.

There is a very good cast to talk about, and you can play up particularly the fact that this was one of Lucille Ricksen's first feature opportunities. She is a girl who should go a long way if properly handled. All of the players did very good work but were handicapped by the continual driving for action and the failure to slow things up with quiet bits of characterization.

Myrtle Stedman gives strength and sympathy to the mother who owned the gambling house. Claire McDowell gave her usual fine performance of the mother on the farm. Lloyd Hughes was a good hero, and George Hackathorne had some splendid moments as the selfish son. Philo McCullough was the sleek city chap, and Bruce Gordon the bread winner who was shot in the gambling house.

NANCY LEE

(No—I am not Robert E.'s granddaughter)

It Wanders a Lot But Hits Nicely at End

The Call of the Canyon

Paramount
Length 7 Reels

DIRECTOR.....Victor Fleming

AUTHOR.....Zane Grey's story, adapted by Doris Schroeder and Edfried Bingham.

CAMERAMAN.....James Howe

GET 'EM IN.....Cast and great outdoors background offer fair exploitation opportunities.

PLEASE 'EM.....This rides fairly well up to finish, where they pull good situation and get it over.

WHOOZINIT.....Lois Wilson, Richard Dix, Marjorie Daw, Noah Beery, Ricardo Cortez, and good cast.

SPECIAL APPEAL.....As novelty angle you might feature jazz party's visit to Western sheep ranch.

STORY VALUES.....This wanders along without accomplishing much emotional stir until final situation, but they register that pretty well.

TREATMENT.....Comedy contrasts manage to pull this out of routine Western rut.

CHARACTERIZATIONS.....Nearly everyone had straight type portrayal to register, with Lois Wilson and Marjorie Daw carrying the emotional burden quite effectively.

ARTISTIC VALUES.....There were many beautiful and effective exterior shots, and they really got over awe-inspiring beauty of the Canyon locations.

This story is centered, in a way, around the conflict between a boy and a girl, created by the fact that the boy loved the wild western country and wanted to live there, while the girl felt that she could not stand such an existence. I would advise you to focus your entire exploitation effort around that thought. Play up the fact that this presents the section of the West capable of fascinating anyone who loves nature, and emphasize the contrast between the simple life on a sheep ranch and the jazz-mad, sensation-loving existence of the city.

For the most part this production wanders along without creating much stir. There are some good comedy moments, as a result of the planting of a group of jazzy youngsters on a western sheep ranch, but the principals are chiefly concerned with the development of a bit of dramatic conflict, which reached a climax at the very end of the film. They did manage to create a good element of suspense. Richard Dix, as the hero, was in love with Lois Wilson, but thoroughly appreciative of the worth of Marjorie Daw, who made it clear that she loved him. A young Western lad loved Marjorie, but, as she told him, Marjorie found herself in the embarrassing predicament of really being in love with two men at the same time, which made things quite intricate. Miss Wilson, after a visit to the sheep ranch, during which she got caught in a sand storm, found herself the center of a fight between Noah Beery and Mr. Dix and decided that she did not care for the crudities of the West but preferred the city.

Deserted by Miss Wilson, Dix finally decided to marry Marjorie, because neighbors had begun to gossip about their being together so much. The titles used, where Dix discussed marrying Marjorie, with her, were not so good. They were surely brutal and hardly what a man would say to a girl he intended to marry.

By taking Miss Wilson to a hospital, where a wounded soldier buddy of friend hero talked with her about his having lost his sweetheart, Miss Wilson saw the light and beat it back West. There was a right good emotional kick in this hospital scene. They then brought us up to a final situation, where Lois arrived in the West just as Dix and Miss Daw were being married. This was played very effectively, with the good element of suspense finally broken naturally by having Miss Daw discover Lois in the church.

I can't consider this a knockout because it goes along in a rut through too much footage before it finally hits. It will get by with most audiences, and the one situation at the end will top it off sufficiently to have it register as good entertainment.

Mr. Dix and Mr. Beery worked hard to make their fight effective, and they even dropped a tree on them to make it a bit different, but somehow there was no real kick to the struggle.

The players, even down to the bits, helped this a lot, and the personalities in the cast really kept this from dying through all of the early reels. Those who helped carry the burden in addition to Misses Wilson and Daw, and Messrs. Dix and Beery, were Ricardo Cortez, Fred Huntly, Lillian Leighton, Helen Dunbar, Leonard Clapham, Edward Clayton, Dorothy Seastrom, Lura Anson, Charles Richards, Danny Hoy, Arthur Rankin and Mervyn Le Roy.

ALL READY FOR THE NEW YEAR RUSH

WILLIAM LOWERY

Convincing Characterizations

599-257 2009 Childs Ave.

Just One of Those Things With Tom Mix

A Mile a Minute Romeo

Fox

Length 5 Reels

DIRECTOR .....Lambert Hillyer

AUTHOR.....Max Brand's story, adapted by Robert N. Lee.

CAMERAMAN .....Daniel Clarke

GET 'EM IN.....This has only such value as Tom Mix's name may have.

PLEASE 'EM.....If they accept Western formula stuff this may get by, although it is rather sick.

WHOOZINIT.....Tom Mix, and cast who tried hard but were handicapped by story.

SPECIAL APPEAL.....I'd go very easy on this one.

STORY VALUES.....It looked like they had tried to write a new story with titles after this was finished.

TREATMENT.....There was little variation from what you have come to expect in a Tom Mix Western with forced comedy titles.

CHARACTERIZATIONS.....Action received more attention than characterizations.

ARTISTIC VALUES.....Just above average.

It would seem to me that it would be possible to find better material than this for Tom Mix. Tom can do stunts and swing a big hat like a regular movie hero, but folks are bound to get a bit tired of seeing the same routine too much.

I got sort of a reaction from this that they had tried to jazz it up with titles after it had been finished. I may be wrong about that, but several of the titles seemed to be rather contrary to the action as played.

There was nothing distinctive about this and it cannot be figured to carry enough comedy to have it register successfully from that viewpoint. Personally I would advise you to let this one ride without worrying about it.

It would seem to me that they could do a great deal better in providing material for Tom Mix if they would plant him continually in mystery melodrama with a strong counterplot of comedy burlesque. This sort of material is not hard to write, and can be ground out just as easy as the formula Westerns.

In some of the recent Mix pictures they have had some very good comedy moments, but they have not yet acquired that nicety of balance which would provide excellent entertainment for all classes, since there should be speed of action, beauty of scenery, and thrills, nicely spotted with burlesque comedy.

I would think that it might be advisable to put a combination of directors on Tom Mix stuff. They could use a serial man for the melodrama, and a comedy gag man for the burlesque conflict, choosing a cameraman to work with the two who could register scenic beauty. In that way they would have some of the sure fire elementary entertainment values that could not go wrong.

Possibly they feel that they have been doing something of that sort over in the Tom Mix organization, and if they have had that sort of thing in mind I can only say that they have fallen short up to date by not knowing values or not knowing exactly how to blend those values.

Undoubtedly Tom Mix has a certain following among those who like straight action stuff, and if, for any reason, you feel that you should play this, I suppose that it could be figured to get by. Don't make any rash promises about the production. Depend entirely upon conversation regarding the star and his horse, Tony.

The title of this gives a bit of a chance for some jazz exploitation by bringing up a question of how speedy Romeos should be, and asking the girls whether they like their Romeos fast or leisurely.

If some of your fellows who do reasonably well with Tom Mix would sit down and write to Bill Fox himself, telling him what sort of material you think they should provide for the cowboy star, I believe that you would find that Bill would pay a lot of attention to your story suggestions. Don't try to send in any scenarios. Just make suggestions as to the type of thing which you think would please your cash customers.

I believe that we need a great deal more co-operation from the exhibitors in the form of intelligent suggestion sent direct to the stars and to the big men at the head of corporations, marked "personal" so that they will get it. All the ranting and raving you might do with the salesman and exchange managers gets you nowhere. You would be agreeably surprised to see how interested the big executives are in well written letters of suggestion that come in from exhibitors commenting upon their product.

SPRING STYLES

CLEVELAND, OHIO, Nov. 24.—The National Women's Dress Association, in convention, announce that the slender, straight line silhouette, developed on wrapped around lines, will retain its popularity in America for the coming year. There will be a wide use of block fabrics, as well as plain, dull-surfaced materials. The definite tendency toward the wearing of shorter dresses will result. The outer wraps following its example. Newer coats of curtailed length will replace the very long coats now in vogue at this time.

IF YOU ARE FAT

Without considering your health

HOW CAN YOU FOLLOW THE STYLES?

We guarantee to make it possible for you to do so.

We will give you a signed guarantee to healthfully and quickly reduce your weight without the use of drugs, exercise, starvation diet, pills, prepared foods, baths, electrical massage, steam, rubs, creeping, rolling, or creams; allow you to eat of the things you like.

You reduce your weight in your home or daily business life. None of your time is lost taking exercises, massages, etc. No one need know how or when you are reducing.

There will be no flabby flesh, wrinkles, or hollow eyes, your health will be improved and youthful figure returned to you.

WE WANT TO TELL YOU ALL ABOUT IT

It is best that you call at our Hollywood office, reception room 212 (Phone 438-125 for private appointment) or send us the coupon below and we will gladly give you full information.

Worth Trying System of Reducing

1505 N. Western, Corner Sunset

Reception Room 212

HOLLYWOOD CALIFORNIA

COUPON

Worth Trying System of Reducing
Room 212, 1505 N. Western Ave.
Phone 438-125, Hollywood, Calif.

Please give me, without cost or obligation, full information on your guaranteed system of reducing overweight, as stated under the conditions in the ad above. Also your bank reference as to your business integrity and financial responsibility.

Name .....

Street .....

City .....

State ..... Phone .....

We Can't Exactly "Make 'em While You Wait"

You see, producing perfect motion picture cameras is really an art.

You can't be sure that you can give us a ring today and get an instrument tomorrow.

We have had to delay deliveries to some mighty fine folks in the past year. They were patient (some of them), but it would be better to plan ahead.

Our production facilities have been greatly increased in our new building, but don't wait for the New Year rush.

Get your orders in now.

We thank you.

Mitchell Camera Corporation

6025 Santa Monica Blvd. Los Angeles, Calif.

PERSONALLY EDITED BY WID

THE FILM AUTHORITY

Wid's

WEEKLY

PUBLISHED IN HOLLYWOOD

VOL. 1. NO. 30

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 22, 1923

Subscription $10.00 per year

No! That is not

E. Alyn [Fred] Warren

But I think he could look like this if you wanted him to.

No. Mr. Warren didn't order this, but I got a little kick out of it when I had the hunch and I thought it might hand you a chuckle.

Has Anyone Seen Santa?

Little PRISCILLA MORAN looks for him just the same as any other kiddie would.

She wishes all the world their stocking full.

Wid's
Weekly

Vol. I. No. 30 Saturday, December 22, 1923 Price 25c

Editor - - - - - - - - - - Wid Gunning

Subscription $10.00 one year in United States. Foreign $15.00.
Subscribers should remit with order.

Editorial and Business Offices:

6411 Hollywood Blvd., (Hollywood) Los Angeles, Calif.
Phone Holly. 1062.

Entered as second class matter September 29th, 1923, at the Post Office at Los Angeles, California, under the act of March 3, 1879.

It's a Great Life!

Out here where the sun shines bright and it's just about the same in winter as it is in summer, the merry old Christmas time sorta sneaks up on you before you know it.

If it wasn't for the kids, we who have been brought up on snow for the holidays would never get the spirit just right, out here. You know that wild Indian of mine, Bill, is seven now. Can you beat it! How the years do roll—and we've got a little blonde kewpie over at the house called Emily, and, say, she's two and a half and talks a blue streak.

It's a great life if you don't take this business of ours too seriously all the time.

From the heart, I wish every sincere worker in the industry a wonderful Christmas, and as to the New Year—well, that's gonna be great—you just can't stop it—don't let anyone tell you different.

We've got a touch of Christmas about this issue because you just can't keep away from it, and at the last minute some of the regulars called up and ordered Merry Xmas announcements.

This isn't a "Christmas number." I ordered the business office not to solicit any advertising for a "Christmas number." I know how some folks feel about being solicited for "Christmas number" advertising, and I told 'em to lay off.

Well, we're pretty close to the New Year. "Old Man Releasing Schedule" is sure sneaking up on the producers and that walk is going to change into a trot and then into a run mighty soon now.

The theaters are doing a marvelous business. They will be crying for new product in another month.

It's a great life—here's hoping you're having your share of the fun.

Wid

Reviews This Week

NAME THE MAN** . . . . . **Goldwyn
WEST OF THE WATER TOWER** . . . . . **Paramount
HOODMAN BLIND** . . . . . **Fox
THE MAN LIFE PASSED BY** . . . . **Metro
LIGHTS OUT** . . . . . **F. B. O.

Clarence Brown

Director of

"THE ACQUITTAL"

and

"THE SIGNAL TOWER"

Wishes All a Merry Christmas
and a
Prosperous New Year

Lookin' Out the Window in Hollywood

Now that the noise of the early fall hurrah about the "bigger and more wonderfulest" pictures has sorta died away, the theater owners are sitting back to check up and they find that the season has brought some darn fine films, but it has also brought the usual crop of so-so stuff and many absolute flops. Well, there is one big difference this year. More than ever before the theater owner has picked out the real ones, paid a good price for them, played them for a longer run, and cleaned up. The so-so stuff has gone begging, except where forced in, and junk is resting high and dry on the shelves. Lots of the out and out independents and the smaller selling organizations have landed their real stuff in houses this year, where in the olden days it would have been worth the life of a salesman from the small company to have even sent in a card. All of which has made it pretty tough on the brothers who are not just sure how good films are made, while the few who really know how to make the real ones are heaving great gobs of relief that the day has come when they can make a few big ones and cash in without having to grind out the quantity hash.

———o———

"West of the Water Tower" should give the Paramount organization something to think about. I hope they give credit to those who put it across, and I hope they begin to realize that you can make real films without big sets and funny costumes.

———o———

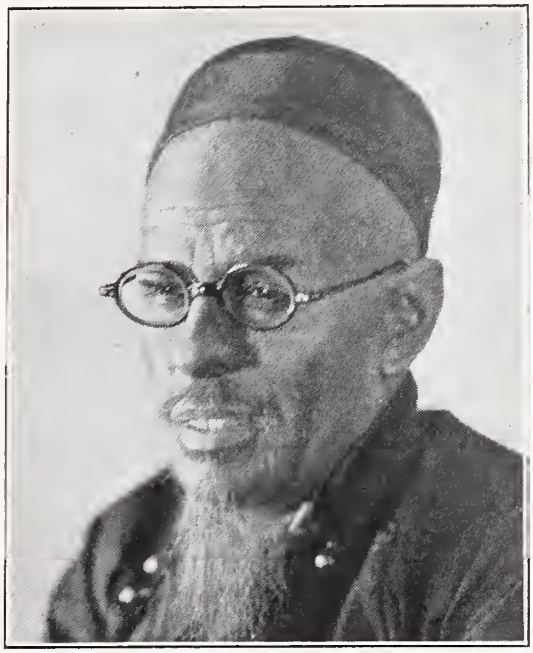
A lot of people are under the impression that a good film might have a hard time getting bookings in theaters. That's a lotta junk. Just the same there is no more important truth that needs to be persistently hammered home, because it will take a lot of yelling about the facts to overcome the impression that has been created through ignorance of actual conditions. A very interesting thing has been happening in show business this season. A show called "Abie's Irish Rose" had trouble getting bookings. The managers were showmen and they knew they had a show. They went into some cities and booked in houses that had always played burlesque—and they cleaned up. When forced out of the Pitt theater in Pittsburgh after playing 24 weeks it went into a burlesque house and played five weeks longer. It has played 14 weeks already in Cleveland and nine weeks in Columbus. Now, fellers, I know Columbus, and I'm here to tell you that nine weeks in Columbus is going some. The point is that you can put a good film or a good show over anywhere if you are a showman, and you never should be satisfied with a one-week first run in a big city or a coupla days in a small city. I'm gonna keep hammering on the facts regarding getting bookings for good films. There's an appalling lot of ignorance in the industry on this point and some fine films have been fearfully manhandled by selling organizations who have failed to get anything like the real value out of them. Great days are coming for real showmen, producers, salesmen, exploitation men, and theater owners, who know how to make and sell real entertainment to the public.

———o———

Out here on the Coast we had some laughs, and some of the boys did some cussing and properly so, over the salary figures printed in New York, listing certain stars. Well, now here's some more laughs for you. Following my little discussion about salaries for executives, Variety comes along with a list of figures supposed to be the annual salary

checks of various executives. There are many laughs in the list to those who know the real facts, but I wonder if you can pick out the two biggest screams. Here is the list:

Adolph Zukor, Famous Players	$1,000,000
Jesse L. Lasky, Famous Players	750,000
Marcus Loew, Metro and Loew	750,000
Cecil B. DeMille, Lasky	600,000
Joseph M. Schenck	500,000
Carl Laemlle, Universal	500,000
William Fox, Fox	500,000
F. J. Godsol, Goldwyn	400,000
D. W. Griffith	500,000
Thomas H. Ince	500,000
Mack Sennett	300,000
Will Hays, Advisor to the Industry	150,000
Al Lichtman, Universal	100,000
Richard Rowland, First National	75,000
W. W. Hodkinson	60,000
Winfield R. Sheehan, Fox	80,000
Arthur Kane, Associated Exhibitors	60,000
James R. Grainger, Goldwyn	50,000

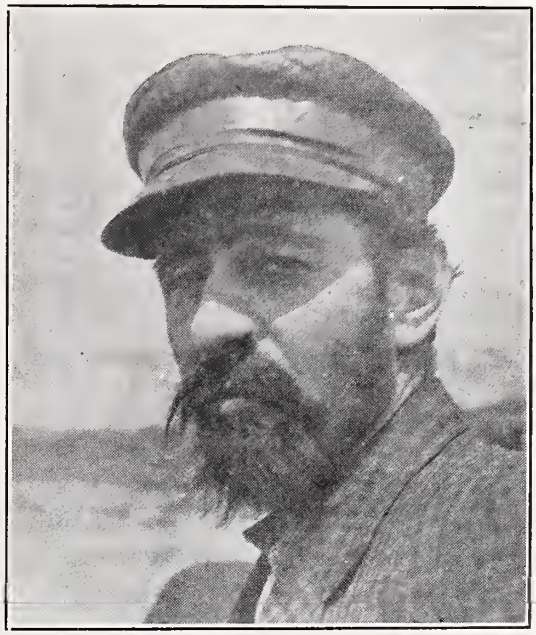


"Sure! This is"

E. Alyn (Fred) Warren

"And so is this"

E. Alyn (Fred) Warren



"And this is"

E. Alyn (Fred) Warren

Direction and Players Make This Striking Drama

Name the Man

Goldwyn
Length 8 Reels

DIRECTOR.....Victor Seastrom

AUTHOR...Hall Caine's novel, adapted by Paul Bern

CAMERAMAN.....Charles Van Enger

GET 'EM IN.....This title, cast, and opportunity to exploit great new director, should pull you big business.

PLEASE 'EM.....Despite rather messy story, directorial genius and players register great dramatic moments, and make this striking production that will impress.

WHOOZINIT....Mae Busch, Conrad Nagel, Creighton Hale, Patsy Ruth Miller, Hobart Bosworth, Evelyn Selbie, De Witt Jennings, Winter Hall, and good cast.

SPECIAL APPEAL.....Play up particularly this is Seastrom's first American film, and talk about justice for women theme, if you think you need it.

STORY VALUES....Author gets dramatic situations, but he leaps wild hurdles to get them, and has messy time clearing it up at the finish.

TREATMENT.....Tempo of big moments, effective paralleling of action, characterization, and atmospheric values, lift this pretty high.

CHARACTERIZATIONS.....Mae Busch registers personal triumph. Conrad Nagel and Creighton Hale have good moments, with Patsy Ruth Miller sort of sticking around. Bosworth does splendid bit, with Evelyn Selbie and De Witt Jennings exceptionally effective in important parts. Winter Hall, and other good players balanced cast nicely.

ARTISTIC VALUES.....Production values were excellent. They registered splendid contrasts, and there were scores of little bits of detail that were particularly commendable.

Watch that man Seastrom. I've seen Seastrom's work for many years, and have been a great admirer of his, but with American co-operation he has shown an advance in this film that marks him as one of the very big directors of the future. Seastrom has been producing for some years in Sweden. I have seen scores of his films that have never been released in this country. This is his first American-made production.

Hall Caine knows dramatic values. Knowing values, and having a reputation, he doesn't worry much about how he gets to his situations or how awkward it may be to untangle them. He works on the theory, I presume, that the important trick is to register good drama while the situations are hitting the high spots, and skip lightly over the mechanics necessary to tie the players in a knot and afterwards untie them again. Caine always concentrates on the knot, rather than on the tying or the untying.

Director Seastrom has done some big things with this, in that he has registered some wonderful character stuff, and given exceptional value to his important dramatic conflict through unusually effective tempo, and a nice method of paralleling contrasting action.

This is another of Hall Caine's stories of "The Isle of Man." We have the familiar figures of the Governor, the Deemster, the Governor's daughter, and the girl who has a child and then comes to court where the Deemster must deliver judgment.

This yarn told in a few paragraphs would seem decidedly blah. Developed with such splendid personalities as appear in this, and directed by a man with such a fine sense of screen technique, we find this carries plenty of emotional kick. There is, in a way, a lesson here for producers, because the very weakest part of this film is the last series of sequences, where a mob figures. It was probably the most expensive sequence. This sequence was necessary to untangle the knot and provide a happy ending, but it is really very much of a let-down from the rest of the film. The only item that lifts the last of the film is the fact that after friend hero has confessed his guilt, and has been sent to jail for two years, we find the Governor's daughter marching into the dungeon, in her wedding dress, and they are married in the dungeon. At least that is different.

Just as Chaplin did in "A Woman of Paris," Seastrom has registered many splendid bits by suggestion. The bit where he played on Bosworth's hands when he died was typical of this excellent technique.

There was a great scene where Evelyn Selbie turned on De Witt Jennings and threw him out of the house. The handling of the scene between Conrad Nagel and Mae Busch, when he took her into his rooms out of the rain, was truly a fine piece of work. There was a beautiful nicety about the timing of the action in the sequence where Mae Busch was locked out of her home the first time.

Of course, they played the courtroom scene for the high spot. This had some great stuff in it, but it missed a bit with me for the reason that Miss Busch was never properly justified in the minds of her audience. I don't care what the author had in his novel. He had plenty of time to play with his situation with words. I think that they certainly should plant into this scene one of two thoughts, either they should register that Mae's mother, Miss Selbie, killed the baby, thinking to save Mae from disgrace, or they should have registered that the baby had died, and that the mother, or Mae, had then taken it to the shore to throw it into the sea. They dodge the issue on this point all the way through the trial, and while they get good drama out of this situation, I believe that every fan is going to lose a certain amount of value because of trying to figure out exactly what did happen to the baby. Certainly they don't like to feel that Mae did kill her child. That's all wet, no matter how you try to dodge it.

Best Wishes

William Duncan

and

Edith Johnson

Characterization Conflict and Great Small Town Stuff

West of the Water Tower

Paramount
Length 7 Reels

DIRECTOR.....Rolin S. Sturgeon

AUTHOR.....Homer Croy's novel, adapted by Lucian Hubbard.

CAMERAMAN.....Harry B. Harris

GET 'EM IN.....You'll have to sell this. It is worth selling, and you're crazy if you don't work on it.

PLEASE 'EM.....Wonderful character stuff, and small town atmosphere and incident make this great entertainment. It will hit everywhere.

WHOOZINIT....Glenn Hunter, May McAvoy, Ernest Torrence, George Fawcett, Zasu Pitts, Ann Schaeffer, Riley Hatch, and good cast.

SPECIAL APPEAL.....This may require your recommendation to pull big business. It is worth yelling about.

STORY VALUES.....Entire plot centered around one good trick situation. There is plenty of character conflict.

TREATMENT....Small town atmosphere is splendid, and they have intelligently concentrated on conflict of thought rather than on conflict of action.

CHARACTERIZATIONS.....Hunter, Miss McAvoy, and Torrence give great performances, with Fawcett, Miss Schaeffer, Miss Pitts, Riley Hatch, and entire cast balancing situations beautifully. The old tramp bit earned many laughs.

ARTISTIC VALUES.....The photography was often harsh and frequently muddy, but since entire offering was played with drab small town background, with no attempt for artificial beauty, photography did not mar this seriously.

Don't take chances with this one. Unless you are careful thousands of folk who would love it will never get in to see it. Put a strenuous campaign of personal recommendation back of this, selling it as a human, forceful comedy drama of real folk in a real small town.

Undoubtedly many people know all about this story. The bulk of your film fans would probably pass it by, however, unless you step heavy on exploitation that is sufficiently distinctive and individual that they will realize that this is an exceptionally well done production.

I ask you particularly to work hard in the selling of this sort of film because unless you do it is possible that a splendid production might fail to register a big return. Every time a really fine film fails to get a sufficiently noisy start to give it a fair chance at the word of mouth advertising value, the industry is placed in the position of having those who don't know values decide that this sort of film is not good because it failed to make big money. Many of the instances where good films fell short of the biggest money were the direct result of poor selling to the public.

Seldom, if ever, have we had a better small town production than this. They start off with a high school graduation, drift into a lunch box social at a church, and afterwards give us hay rides, poolroom conferences, natural small town gossip, and finally a parade, without at any time hitting a really false note to those who are truly familiar with small town life.

The best thing about this production is the fact that they concentrate on conflict between characters rather than upon conflict of action. The whole story centers around one idea. A minister's son loves the daughter of the wealthy man of the town, who is an atheist. They think they are secretly married, but afterwards are unable to locate the man who married them, and are informed that the marriage was a frame-up. A child is born and they are disgraced in the town. Years afterwards, when the town needs a speaker, they ask the boy to serve, and he does so successfully. There is a triumphal return to the town, during which the man who married the young people recognizes the speaker, and they learn that they were really properly married after all.

It's the very simplicity of this story which gives it its great strength. They have concentrated on the development of bits of business and little incidents which clearly stamp all of the principal characters.

The adaptation and editing is very good, and I want to particularly commend the titles because many of the lapse of time titles and the state of mind titles help wonderfully in tying the action together and giving the incidents the proper dramatic register.

The tempo throughout was excellent, and this film alone is sufficient to place Glenn Hunter in an enviable position among the favorites whom the fans will spend money to see.

May McAvoy was a splendid choice for the part of the girl. She is a great little trouper and gives a wonderful performance. Ernest Torrence plays with such sincerity and conviction, the part of the minister, that it seems impossible that this can be the same man that you have rolled in your chair laughing at in some of his comedy productions. George Fawcett and Riley Hatch are effective; and Ann Schaeffer, one of the good oldtimers, makes Hunter's mother a valuable character. Zasu Pitts helps get this away to a wonderful comedy start, and although she drifts out of the main action later on, her comedy scenes at the first of the film were very helpful in getting this under way.

Mr. Producer

Getting past your lieutenants and secretaries is tougher than battering a brick wall.

Now, on the level, are you anxious to engage Honest-to-God efficient, trained men or not.

I can tell you about a man who would make a fine

Production Manager

Because of his vast technical knowledge pertaining to production.

Because of his ability to estimate costs and to plan work so as to keep within estimates.

Because of his knowledge of those things that are essential to efficient handling of a production from the adaptation of a story to its final editing.

Because he is essentially an emergency man. He knows how to overcome the various difficulties that frequently arise, and that so often cause a great loss of time, with its attendant expense. This knowledge is due to practical experience of 17 years in the motion picture industry.

He Is Also Qualified as a Reader

Because of his knowledge of motion picture values in a story as well as dramatic values, due to a wide experience as an actor and stage director before becoming identified with picture production.

Because he is capable of writing a comprehensive short synopsis as well as review a story, and suggest such treatment as may be necessary for proper picturization.

Because he has a knowledge of censorship requirements of various communities, and for that reason he can point out censorable points of a story and the way to overcome them.

Because he is capable of adapting a story to the screen and can write a good continuity.

Because his knowledge of production requirements, essentials, and difficulties enables him to edit a story in continuity form, thus eliminating many unnecessary scenes and sequences that are often made only to be finally discarded.

Because he has made a deep study of story psychology and is for that reason capable of selecting such story material as will be entertaining.

Because of the fact that he has written, directed and produced more than 350 stories and plays of every class, from one-reel comedy to eight-reel features, without one financial failure. This speaks for itself.

He don't drink, steal, lie or graft. He's not a loafer, a trouble maker or a woman chaser. You can reach that man care of Box 43, care of Wid's Weekly.

Wid says he O. K.'s the above—Now What About It?

Can You Use a Real Worker?

Plot Misses But Action May Please Meller Fans

Hoodman Blind

Fox
Length 7 Reels

DIRECTOR.....John Ford

AUTHOR.....Sir Henry Jones and Wilson Barrett's play, adapted by Charles Kenyon.

CAMERAMAN.....George Schneiderman

GET 'EM IN.....The only value I see is a coupla fights and a shipwreck. It's a movie meller.

PLEASE 'EM.....It's a queer twin stepsister yarn that may interest some fans because it moves.

WHOOZINIT....Gladys Hulette, David Butler, Frank Campeau, Marc McDermott and Eddie Gribbon.

SPECIAL APPEAL.....This hardly justifies any theme exploitation, and really offers no special slant worth yelling about.

STORY VALUES.....The plot really licks both the director and the players. It is far fetched, crude, and you just can't believe it.

TREATMENT...There were some splendid directorial touches registering entrances and little bits of business, but they never overcame the crude mechanics of the story.

CHARACTERIZATIONS.....Gladys Hulette was very good as the sweet daughter, but overplayed the tough stepsister. Frank Campeau did a good hypocritical lawyer, with Dave Butler a stalwart hero, and Marc McDermott a weakling who became wealthy and wiser. Eddie Gribbon's chief job was staging a fight with Dave Butler.

ARTISTIC VALUES.....The atmosphere was registered effectively. They shot a lot of night stuff, and generally the photography and production values were very good.

I think this story licked them before they started. Certainly the adaptation licked them, if what we see on the screen is what the adaptation provided. When you get all through looking at this the only thing that stands out is the fact that Dave Butler and Eddie Gribbon had a fight on the beach, and in the last reel there was a lot of running around about a shipwreck, about which the audience will not become tremendously excited, because they have no real sympathy for any one on the ship.

They took a hop, skip and jump in the prologue, and showed Marc McDermott desert two wives, and then land in South Africa, where, in one title, he became tremendously wealthy. With the lapse of years, we found that each of the wives had left a daughter. Odd as it may seem to you, these daughters, by different mothers, looked exactly alike.

In order to make it a plot, the daughter who had become pretty much of a bum wandered into the little town where the other daughter was living happily married, just at the time that our willunous lawyer hypocrite was trying to figure out a way to inveigle the sweet daughter away from her hubby.

The lawyer hired the tough daughter and a prize fighter to parade the streets together, in order to make the sweet daughter's hubby jealous, and finally, when he discovered them together, there was a big fight. Then the father came home, and got hit by an automobile, so that we had some scenes where the tough daughter and her father finally decided to forgive one another. Hubby threw his sweet wife and child out of the house, and they parked on the dock. The willun hired some sailors to kidnap the wife, because he had persuaded the injured father to sign a will leaving all his fortune to him, and then the tough daughter, at the right moment, accidentally landed on the dock, while the other daughter found shelter in a nearby home, so the tough daughter was kidnaped. Then the boat was shipwrecked, and for some reason all the sailors came ashore, leaving the girl there, so that hubby had to swim out to the boat, thinking he was going to rescue his wife, whom he had just thrown out of his house. Discovering that there were two daughters, everything was straightened out, and they gave us the usual bromide finish.

Whoever decided that this would be good screen material must have seen something in it that they didn't get into the scenario. As this shows up on the screen, it is a very crude meller. It has no redeeming value other than the action contained.

Duel roles are always a handicap to any story, and unfortunately Gladys Hulette seemed ill at ease in the characterization part, and very much inclined to overplay.

The director, John Ford, registered a dozen or more very good moments. Most of these were little touches covering entrances and little bits of comedy by-play. The atmospheric values throughout were very good. The prologue was registered properly in the period of twenty-five years ago, and outside of the long shots of the shipwreck, which seemed rather a poor miniature to me, the settings and locations were good.

Frank Campeau, as the old lawyer who kept the money sent for the child's education, and then wanted to marry her to corral the rest, gave some character shadings that were very good. Dave Butler did the he-man stuff all right, although his characterization was more physical than mental. Marc McDermott didn't have much chance to really register much in the part of the father.

Figured from a box office viewpoint, I can't particularly see this. The name means nothing, the cast hasn't any particular pulling power, and it would be rather a job to figure out any theme catch lines. Of course, the plot presents the thought that a father, who walks out on two wives and two daughters, will probably suffer as a result, but we find everyone beautifully happy in this one before they get through, and father doesn't seem to have suffered any particular pain except where the automobile carrying his tough daughter bumped him in the rear.

Don't talk about "Cameo Kirby" in selling this, as a John Ford production, because this will never do Mr. Ford any good, and you shouldn't discount the value of the splendid impression that "Cameo Kirby" should have created.

Producer

Roy H. Klumb

Director

Announcing for the Season of 1924
Two Special Features

Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

They Register Good Moments That Carry This

The Man Life Passed By

Metro

Length 7 Reels

DIRECTOR.....Victor Schertzinger

AUTHOR.....Victor Schertzinger

CAMERAMAN.....Chester Lyons

GET 'EM IN.....The cast is your strongest selling point on this.

PLEASE 'EM.....Despite mechanical structure, this has good dramatic and comedy moments, and is entertaining enough to please.

WHOOZINIT....Percy Marmont, Cullen Landis, Jane and Eva Novak, Hobart Bosworth, George Siegman, Lincoln Stedman, Lydia Knott and Gertrude Short.

SPECIAL APPEAL.....You might help this with the old Salvation Army slogan, "A man may be down but he's never out." Play up the "have faith in yourself" idea.

STORY VALUES.....The mechanics were a bit crude, but the director knew where his values were and made many of the situations decidedly effective.

TREATMENT.....By hurrying over the weak spots and concentrating heavily on the moments that had value, Schertzinger has managed to make this story seem tremendously better than it is.

CHARACTERIZATIONS.....Occasionally the players trouped pretty hard, but the situations went into melodrama so that the overplaying got by nicely. All of the personalities helped in holding the interest. They were beautifully cast.

ARTISTIC VALUES.....There were some impressive sets, and the atmosphere generally was quite satisfactory.

I must give Victor Schertzinger, the director, exceptional credit for making such a good picture out of the rather mechanical movie plot written by Victor Schertzinger, the author. Vic has done an excellent bit of work with this offering because he has taken all of the high spots, which values he saw in the story he had devised, and has given them a certain amount of definite value through treatment. The mechanics of the plot and the method of bringing about the various situations could not be called good, but many of the situations themselves had good dramatic value, and there were some nice little bits of comedy that helped to make this good entertainment.

Vic picked an excellent cast. All of his principals blended beautifully into the melodramatic conflict which he was presenting, and their personalities helped you to accept what otherwise would have registered as a very artificial movie yarn.

Percy Marmont, as the inventor who had been robbed of his wonderful patent process for hardening steel, did a character quite a bit like his "Puzzlehead Sabre." He was the central figure of the story. You should play up this character since your one chance for conversation about this is to develop the idea that a man should never give up or lose faith in himself and his possibilities for success.

Hobart Bosworth as the domineering steel king, with Cullen Landis, as his secretary who was fired in every scene but never believed it, made a good pair for human comedy that lightened the meller.

Jane and Eva Novak were cast as sisters. One stayed at home and spent father's money. The other ran a Mission in the slums to save lost souls. One sister got herself into a lot of trouble through a foolish slumming party and was saved only by virtue of the influence that the Mission running sister had had upon Marmont, the wrecked character, who had started to avenge himself upon the steel king through the silly daughter.

Gertie Short, as the chum of Eva Novak, helped pull a lot of laughs. Lincoln Stedman provided a good contrast and foil for Hero Cullen Landis.

The fact that this story had something of the curse of movie artificiality about it handicapped it a lot. Many of the lapse of time titles added to this handicap instead of lifting the curse a bit. One of these titles spoke about "Fate the Scoffer," and in another place they shot the three words, "Conscience, Torture and Despair" at you, done in a lot of fancy lettering, where it would have been tremendously more effective to have had no title at all.

To add to the burden of most of these lapse of time titles, we found, down in the corner, a bit of reading matter giving the name of the picture, with the line "It's a Metro" under it. This is a relic of the days when the Biograph Company and Kalem used to print their names on the sets in every scene of the one reelers. I leave it to you just exactly what mental reaction an audience should get, providing they have been brought to a point of being interested in a character's struggles, if they found a title bouncing up on the screen that read, "Conscience, Torture, Despair—The Man Life Passed By. It's a Metro."

In some places the titling was very good. They got a good comedy value out of repeating Gertie Short's plaintive moan, "I wanta go home." Another laugh was registered where Bosworth told Eva Novak that she was never around except long enough to say three things, "Good night, good morning, and gimme."

From a straight commercial angle I believe this has good value. There are good sets, there is a slumming party, and a wild society party—with the guests doing a burlesque of Roman days.

Vic Schertzinger has done some good work. Tell your fans this was made by the man who made most of Charlie Ray's early successes, and who recently made Jackie Coogan's "Long Live the King."

Can You Sell Stories?

The coming production season—beginning right now—will be a story season. Not only books and plays, but real originals will be in big demand—at big money.

Selling stories is not easy. It is tedious—it calls for work—it calls for patience—it calls for intelligence—it calls for diplomatic yet dignified presentation of material, no matter how good the material.

Have you those qualifications?

We are in a position to give you to sell the work of some of the best minds in this industry. We can give you intelligent co-operation.

If you think you can handle this work, write out the reasons why you think you are qualified and mail your application to

THE STORY SELLERS

Room 207, 6411 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood

(Do not apply in person. You will be called for an appointment after your letter has been considered.)

Mr. Producer:

Those who are accepted for this work—will not annoy you—they will give you a service.

This service will be the presentation of story material of exceptional merit.

If you now want some particular type of story for a certain director or star—advise us. We believe we can deliver. We won't annoy you with impossible stuff.

We know values. We know studio conditions. We are specialists in this work. We are ready—are you? Next year's productions must carry story value, intelligently adapted for the screen.

Corking Combination of Comedy and Novelty Meller

Lights Out

F. B. O.

Length 7 Reels

DIRECTOR.....Al Santell

AUTHOR.....Mann Page and Paul Dickey's play, adapted by Rex Taylor.

CAMERAMAN.....William Marshall

GET 'EM IN.....Sell this hard as crook story full of real laughs.

PLEASE 'EM.....It's a bit too long but sure has splendid entertainment value.

WHOOZINIT....Ben Deely, Ruth Stonehouse, Walter McGrail, Marie Astaire, and very good cast.

SPECIAL APPEAL.....The novel idea of this is well worth tipping in advance. They reproduce a crook's career in a movie serial to capture him. Play that up to arouse interest in this.

STORY VALUES.....It may seem a nut idea, but this thing has some great situations.

TREATMENT.....They have secured wonderful suspense and comedy values by the handling of characters and incidents. The whole gang deserve a lot of credit.

CHARACTERIZATIONS.....Ben Deely gives an outstanding performance, and Ruth Stonehouse delivers a real characterization as "Hairpin" Annie. Walter McGrail and Theodore Von Eltz provide splendid contrast, and while these four carry the burden, every bit is very well done. Hank Mann, in black face, earns an unusual number of real laughs.

ARTISTIC VALUES.....Production values generally were very good, with studio stuff handled nicely and kept properly in the story.

Unfortunately, in this business, theater owners are inclined to grade product in advance according to the corporation selling it. I don't believe that the public knows enough about producing and selling organizations to really consider that angle, but the theater owner's attitude hurts a production like this. It is very often difficult to get even so good a bit of entertainment into the big houses principally because the theater owner feels that it can't be a knockout unless it is being sold by one of the bigger companies. This film ran in a vaudeville house here, which, in my opinion, was a crime, because I think it is great entertainment. Possibly the selling organization didn't sense its full value. Possibly it is their fault that they did not sell it better.

Here's a crook story, with wonderful laugh values, tied together with a certain amount of melodramatic suspense that the players really get across. There is no better entertainment combination in the show business.

I would suggest to a lot of the brothers that they sort of check up on this boy Al Santell. He has delivered something in this.

Ben Deely's performance as the very wicked willun is a gem. He has his audience every minute.

Ruth Stonehouse hasn't been on the screen as much recently as she should be. Ruth delivers a characterization in this of the sort that we surely need much more regularly than we are getting them. With the coming of the days when story values and characterizations will be the thing sought for, here's one former favorite whose name will probably loom up in a great many more casts.

Hank Mann does a blackface in this as a Pullman porter, who afterwards becomes a servant of the scenario writer in Hollywood, and while much of his stuff might be classed as hokum, he earns his laughs and he gets 'em plenty.

Walter McGrail did a fine hero, and Theodore Von Eltz put just enough of the awkward stuff into his nut scenario writing character to get it over without overreaching too much.

This thing starts off with a lot of mystery in the observation car of a moving train, where several crooks are trying to secure a black bag, thought to contain the loot from a Texas bank. They develop this stuff with great values. Finally they find that the treasure in the bag is a lot of movie scenarios. Then they hit upon a great nut idea. They decide to write a serial, with the bank robber as the central figure, and make the character so rotten that the real robber will try to find the person responsible for the story, and in that manner make him come out of hiding.

At first the movie serial gag seemed terribly far fetched, but really when they showed you the heavy putting on the dog in a South American cafe, and then flashed on the screen a film with the heavy apparently there in the picture, described in a title as a no-account, double-crossing, woman-beating skunk, you sort of began to believe that it would be possible to get a tough guy sore enough, through such a method, to make him want to get the one responsible for such an expose.

They got a lot of laughs and some pretty good meller suspense out of the situations when Ben Deely, the crook, came to Hollywood to kill the guy who had written the serial. Of course, Deely also played the part of the actor who was supposed to be doing the character in the serial, and this developed into several corking comedy situations.

From the viewpoint of meller farce construction this thing is about as good as most any idea that they have put on the screen in some time. They milked it dry, and I'm willing to bet that any audience anywhere will get an awful lot of laughs.

I'm a bit late in catching this, and that is partly due to that same state of mind which I commented on earlier. No particular noise has been made about the production and I really was rather astonished to find that it registered such excellent entertainment value.

If you or your opposition haven't played this, get busy.

Alan Alexander Productions

WID'S 12-22-23

We're Happy This Xmas
We Hope You Are ---

It's been fine to get into our new building.

It's been most gratifying to have so many orders come in.

It's been wonderful to make so many new friends and to continue to please our old friends.

If you are not using "Mitchells" on your lot, we sincerely feel that you will have a happier New Year if you place your orders—right now—today.

We thank you.

Mitchell Camera Corporation

6025 Santa Monica Blvd. Los Angeles, Calif.